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A

HISTORY OF ENGLAND

1624–1628

VOL. II.

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A

HISTORY OF ENGLAND

UNDER THE

DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM AND CHARLES I.

1624–1628

2512

BY

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CONTENTS

OF

THE SECOND VOLUME.

CHAPTER XI.

THE SECOND PARLIAMENT OF CHARLES I.—THE PRELIMINARIES OF THE DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM'S IMPEACHMENT.

		PAGE
1626	Opening of Parliament	1
	Eliot's position in the House	2
	He demands enquiry into past mismanagement	4
	Laud's sermon	6
	The conference on Montague's books	7
	Case of the 'St. Peter' of Havre de Grace	8
	Release of the ship and reprisals in France	9
	Eliot's charge against Buckingham	10
	State of feeling in the House of Lords	11
	Fresh overtures from Richelieu	12
	The riot at Durham House	14
	The marriage of Lord Maltravers	15
	Arundel sent to the Tower	16
	The Commons wish to enquire into the proceedings of the Council of War	17
	The Councillors refuse to reply	18
	Charles supports them in their refusal	19
	Dr. Turner's queries	21
	Personal attack upon Buckingham	22

		PAGE
1626	Charles defends his minister	23
	Eliot counsels the Commons to persist	24
	Eliot's speech against Buckingham	25
	Charles refuses to accept the doctrine of ministerial responsibility	27
	Coventry's declaration of his pleasure	28
	Buckingham's vindication of his proceedings	29
	Remonstrance of the Commons	30
	The Commons are allowed to proceed with their enquiry into Buckingham's conduct	31
	Vote that common fame is a good ground for their action	32
	The French Government favours the English alliance	33
	Charles throws obstacles in the way of an agreement	34
	Blainville leaves England	36
	Treaty between France and Spain—End of the French alliance	37

CHAPTER XII.

THE IMPEACHMENT OF THE DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM.

1626	The House of Lords demands Arundel's liberation	38
	Bristol's confinement at Sherborne	39
	He is forbidden to come to Parliament	40
	Petitions the Lords for his writ	41
	Comes to London, accuses Buckingham, and is accused by the King	42
	Interference of the King in Buckingham's favour	45
	Buckingham impeached by the Commons	46
	Prologue by Digges	47
	Charges brought against Buckingham	48
	Eliot's summing up	51
	Charles's indignation	57
	Replies to the Lords' demand for Arundel's liberation	58
	Imprisonment of Eliot and Digges	59
	Carleton threatens the House with the danger of Parliaments falling into disuse	60
	Digges cleared by the House of Lords	61
	Digges released, but Eliot kept in prison	62
	The Commons suspend their sittings	63
	Eliot released	64
	Bristol's case before the Lords	65
	Liberation of Arundel	66

		PAGE
1626	Buckingham elected Chancellor of Cambridge University	67
	The King demands supply	68
	The Commons prepare a Remonstrance	69
	They demand Buckingham's dismissal	70
	Parliament dissolved	72

CHAPTER XIII.

THE RUPTURE WITH FRANCE AND THE FORCED LOAN.

1626	Proclamation for the peace of the Church	74
	Buckingham's case to be tried in the Star Chamber	75
	The Parliamentary managers refuse to countenance the trial	76
	Demand of a free gift from the counties	77
	Dismissal of justices of the peace	78
	Wentworth's character	79
	Nature of his opposition	80
	His overtures to Buckingham	81
	His dismissal from office	82
	The free gift refused in the counties	84
	Ships demanded from the maritime counties	85
	Willoughby's fleet at Portsmouth	86
	Buckingham's relations with Pembroke	87
	Disagreement between Charles and the Queen	88
	The Queen at Tyburn	89
	Dismissal of the Queen's French attendants	90
	Proposal to debase the coin	92
	The struggle in North Germany	93
	Defeat of Mansfeld and Christian IV.	94
	Bassompierre's mission	95
	Capture of French prizes	97
	The forced loan	98
	Sequestration of Eliot's Vice-Admiralty	100
	Buckingham proposes to go to France	101
	Seizure of the wine fleet at Bordeaux	102
	Buckingham appeals to Bassompierre	103
	Prospects of the loan	104
	Resistance of the judges—Dismissal of Chief Justice Crew	105
	Resistance spreading in the country	106
	Pennington ordered to attack French ships at Havre	107
1627	But finds no ships there	108
	Rupture with France	109

CHAPTER XIV.

THE EXPEDITION TO RHÉ.

		PAGE
1627	Mutiny in Pennington's fleet	111
	Partial success of the loan	112
	Growing resistance to it	113
	The chief opponents summoned before the Council	114
	Their imprisonment or confinement	115
	The war with France	117
	Pennington's attack upon the French shipping	118
	Negotiations opened with Spain	119
	Interviews between Rubens and Gerbier	120
	Alarm of the Dutch ambassador	121
	Agreement between France and Spain	122
	Help offered by Charles to Christian IV.	123
	Morgan takes four regiments to the Elbe	124
	Walter Montague's mission	126
	Preparations for the relief of Rochelle	127
	Buckingham's instructions	128
	Sailing of the fleet	130
	Buckingham's landing in the Isle of Rhé	131
	Marches to St. Martin's	133
	Lukewarmness of the Rochellese	134

CHAPTER XV.

THE SIEGE OF ST. MARTIN'S.

1627	Commencement of the siege	135
	The siege converted into a blockade	136
	Need of reinforcements	137
	Eagerness of the King to support Buckingham	138
	Difficulties of the Exchequer	139
	Becher carries a few recruits to Rhé	141
	Death of Sir John Burgh	142
	Supplies introduced into St. Martin's	143
	Buckingham resolves to carry on the siege	144
	Holland expected with reinforcements	145
	Rohan's insurrection meets with no general support	146
	Failure of the negotiations with Spain	147
	Christian IV. overpowered	148
	Misery in Morgan's regiments	149

		PAGE
1627	Seizure of a French ship in the Texel	150
	English feeling against Buckingham	151
	Delays in Holland's sailing	154
	The King's anxiety	155
	Holland is unable to leave	156
	Disorganisation of the Government	157
	The King constant to Buckingham	158
	Gloomy prospects of the force at Rhé	159
	Landing of the French on the island	160
	The retreat from St. Martin's	161
	Slaughter of the English	162
	Re-embarkation of the troops	163
	Buckingham's part in the disaster	164

CHAPTER XVI.

PREROGATIVE GOVERNMENT IN CHURCH AND STATE.

1627	Buckingham's reception in England	167
	Increased resistance to the loan	168
	Ecclesiastical parties	169
	Laud's royalism	171
	Sibthorpe's sermon on Apostolic Obedience	173
	Abbot sent into confinement for refusing to license it	174
	Manwaring's sermons on Religion and Allegiance	175
	Manwaring's theory of government	177
	Eliot's petition from the Gatehouse	180
	Precedents affecting the loan	181
	Arguments in the King's Bench on behalf of the prisoners who demand a *habeas corpus*	182
	Heath's argument for the Crown	184
	The prisoners remanded	185
	The sailors ready to mutiny	187
	Bad conduct of the billeted soldiers	188
	Schemes for raising money	189
	Charles and Buckingham resolve to carry on the war	190
	Excise proposed in the Council	192
	A standing force proposed	193
1628	German horse sent for	194
	Abandonment of the proposed excise	195
	The prisoners released and Parliament summoned	196
	Ship-money demanded and then abandoned	197
	Commission to enquire how excise can be levied	198
	Bad state of Denbigh's fleet	199

CHAPTER XVII.

THE THIRD PARLIAMENT OF CHARLES I.—THE LEADERSHIP OF SIR THOMAS WENTWORTH.

		PAGE
1628	Laud's sermon	200
	Opening of the session	201
	Coke's Imprisonment Bill	202
	Seymour and Eliot on grievances	203
	Wentworth's demands	205
	Comparison between Wentworth and Eliot	207
	Secretary Coke acknowledges that the law has been broken	208
	The Jesuits at Clerkenwell	209
	Secretary Coke tries to frighten the Commons	210
	Debate on the liberty of the subject	211
	Sir E. Coke's statement of the law	212
	The Commons' resolution against unparliamentary taxation	213
	Nethersole's argument from political expediency	213
	The legal argument in the foreground	214
	Controversy between Coke and Shilton	215
	Anderson's judgment produced	216
	The Commons' resolutions on imprisonment	217
	Debate on supply	218
	Debate on billeting	219
	The resolutions on taxation and imprisonment sent up to the Lords	223
	Five subsidies voted in Committee, but not reported	223
	Wentworth proposes a Bill on the liberties of the subject	224
	The King pleased at the vote of supply	225
	Arguments before the Lords on the resolutions	226
	Further discussion on billeting	227
	A Good Friday's debate on martial law	228
	The Lords incline towards the King	230
	The Commons refuse to proceed further with supply	231
	Debate in the Upper House on the resolutions	232
	The Lords' propositions	234
	Criticism of the Commons	236
	Noy and Wentworth for a *Habeas Corpus* Act	237
	Coventry declares that the King's word must be taken	238
	The Commons order the preparation of a Bill on the liberty of the subject	239
	The Bill brought in by Coke	240
	Wentworth proposes a Bill of his own	241
	The King rejects Wentworth's terms	243
	Wentworth's appeal to the King	244
	End of Wentworth's leadership	246

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE PETITION OF RIGHT.

		PAGE
1628	Dissatisfaction of the House	248
	Coke proposes a Petition of Right	250
	The Petition of Right brought in	251
	The Petition before the Lords	252
	The King's defence of his claim to imprison without showing cause	253
	The Lords attempt to mediate	254
	Clause prepared by Arundel and Weston	256
	The clause rejected by the Commons	257
	Buckingham urges the Lords to resist	258
	The Lords try to explain away the clause	259
	The Commons persist in rejecting it	260
	Wentworth proposes a further accommodation	261
	Eliot's rejoinder	262
	Wentworth's reply	263
	The Commons decide against Wentworth	264
	Fresh proposal by the Lords	265
	The Lords give way	266
	The petition passes both Houses	268
	The surrender of Stade	269
	Denbigh's failure to relieve Rochelle	270
	Resolution of Charles to make another effort	272
	Charles hesitates about the petition	273
	Questions the judges	274
	Consults the Council	275
	Answer agreed on	276
	Worthlessness of the answer	277
	Eliot's resolution	278
	His speech on the state of the nation	279
	A remonstrance proposed	281
	The King tries to stop it	282
	Distress of the House	283
	Phelips proposes to ask leave to go home	284
	Eliot stopped by the Speaker	285
	Coke attacks Buckingham by name	286
	Selden moves that the impeachment be renewed	287
	Intervention of the Lords	288
	Charles draws back	289
	The Lords ask for a clear answer to the petition	290
	Charles gives the Royal assent to the Petition of Right	291

CHAPTER XIX.

REMONSTRANCE AND PROROGATION.

		PAGE
1628	The petition compared with Magna Charta	293
	Impeachment of Manwaring	294
	Pym's declaration of principle	295
	Subsidies voted and the Remonstrance proceeded with	298
	The Remonstrance voted	299
	Charles will not give up Buckingham	300
	Wild stories told of the Duke	301
	Murder of Dr. Lambe	302
	The King's answer to the Remonstrance	303
	Buckingham seeks to meet the charges against him	304
	Debate on tonnage and poundage	305
	Remonstrance on tonnage and poundage	306
	The King's speech	308
	Parliament prorogued	309
	Was tonnage and poundage included in the Petition of Right?	310
	The case for the Commons	312
	Ecclesiastical promotions	314
	Buckingham's foreign policy	315
	Carlisle's mission	316
	Prospects of peace with France and Spain	317
	Suspicion of the Dutch	319
	Changes in the Government	320
	Wentworth's peerage	321
	Expectations held out to him of the presidentship of the North	322
	Wentworth's political position	323

CHAPTER XX.

ASSASSINATION OF THE DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM.

1628	Lady Buckingham's overtures to Williams	325
	Reconciliation between Buckingham and Williams	326
	Influence of Carleton over Buckingham	327
	Buckingham surrenders the Cinque Ports	328
	Resistance of Rochelle	329
	Buckingham engaged to relieve it	330
	Difficulties in his way	331
	He welcomes Contarini's offer of Venetian mediation	332
	The King hesitates	333

		PAGE
1628	Forebodings of evil	334
	Mutiny at Portsmouth	335
	Murder of the Duke by Felton	337
	Seizure of the assassin	338
	Story of Felton	339
	His popularity	341
	Alexander Gill at Oxford	343
	Buckingham's funeral	344
	His career	344
	Felton threatened with the rack	346
	His execution	347
	Lindsey takes the fleet to the relief of Rochelle	348
	Failure of the attempt	349
	Montague's negotiation	350
	Charles rejects the terms offered	351
	Orders Lindsey to persevere	352
	Surrender of Rochelle	353
	Charles's failure	354
	End of the war period	355

MAP OF THE ISLE OF RHÉ . . . . . *To face Title-page*

Errata.

Page 78. line 13, *for* 'Mansel' *read* 'Mansell.'
„ 122 first side note, *for* 'committed' read 'consulted.'
„ 123 transpose notes 2 and 3.
„ 131 line 5, *for* 'La Prée and' *read* 'La Prée on the island with.'
„ 194 line 1, *for* 'Suckling' *read* 'Savile.'

ENGLAND

UNDER THE

DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM AND CHARLES I.

CHAPTER XI.

THE SECOND PARLIAMENT OF CHARLES I.—THE PRELIMINARIES OF THE DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM'S IMPEACHMENT.

CHAP. XI.

1626. Feb. 6. Opening of the session.

Few and unimportant were the words which Charles addressed to the Houses at the opening of the session. "I mean to show," he said, in the excuse of this brevity, "what I should speak in actions." Nor did the new Lord Keeper, who followed, add much to the knowledge of his hearers. He had nothing to say about the pressing wants of the Exchequer, nothing about the position which the King had taken up on the Continent; and, but for a passing allusion, no one would have gathered from Coventry's language that England was at war with Spain, still less that it had entered upon a serious diplomatic contest with France.

Want of money.

And yet money was sorely needed. The Privy seals were coming in slowly, and eight weeks later they had produced less than 28,000*l.*[1] The hopes

[1] Breviates of the receipts of the Exchequer.

CHAP. XI. 1626.

which had been placed upon the Crown jewels had proved still more fallacious. The Amsterdam merchants had refused to take them in pledge unless they could also have security for their redemption within a limited period.[1]

Feb. 10. Rudyerd's motion.

When, on February 10, Rudyerd, the usual mouthpiece of the Government, rose to speak, he had still nothing to say about supply. He commended the King's zeal for religion as evinced by his late proceedings against the Catholics, and moved for a committee to consider how to increase the livings of the poorer clergy, and how to deal with ministers who were leading immoral lives. The motion for a committee was adopted with an amendment by Pym that it should be empowered to consider all matters relating to religion. Charles evidently intended to stand upon his Protestantism. If he no longer protected the Roman Catholics, if he was ready to carry out practical reforms in the English Church, and if he was in close alliance with the States, why should not the Commons vote him large supplies to carry out so popular a policy?

Supply suggested.

Why should they not? Phelips was not there to say him nay; nor Coke, nor Seymour, nor even Wentworth; and Sir John Coke rose hopefully to hint something about a grant of supply.[2] But there was one there who had been overlooked when the sheriffs had been pricked, and from whom no opposition was expected, who had something to say before a motion for supply was carried. Eliot's last publicly spoken words at Oxford had been in defence of Buck-

Eliot's position in the last Parliament.

[1] D. Carleton to Conway, Jan. 22; *S. P. Holland.*

[2] Mr. Forster (*Sir J. Eliot*, i. 284) says—'The new secretary thereupon reminding the House of his Majesty's hint as to time, and that unreasonable slowness might produce as ill effect as denial, Eliot promptly rose.' This is I suppose from the *Port Eliot Notes*, and must have referred to supply.

CHAP. XI.

1626. Feb. 10.

ingham's personal integrity.[1] But the refusal of the favourite to submit his actions to the judgment of independent councillors, and the contempt shown for the House of Commons by the hasty dissolution, had thrown him entirely on the side of the opposition.

1625. He watches events.

Eliot was in no hurry to act. With a man of his warm and affectionate disposition the old personal ties which had bound him to Buckingham must still have counted for much. In the interval between the two Parliaments he had been anxiously watching the course of events. As Vice-Admiral of Devon he had special opportunities for witnessing the miserable results of a policy which his head and his heart alike condemned. He had been present at the sailing of the fleet, and when it sought refuge in Plymouth Sound from its unlucky voyage, he had been witness of the miseries to which those on board were doomed by a Government which had launched them into the midst of the hazards of war without sufficient means to provide for their daily wants. He knew well how the poor wretches, torn from their homes a few short months before, were wandering about the streets of Plymouth without food or money; how they were denied shelter by the inhabitants; and how, with nothing but their shirts on their backs to ward off the wintry cold, they were dropping down dead in the long December nights.[2]

Does not break with the Government.

Yet, whatever Eliot's thoughts may have been, there was no open breach between him and the men in authority at Court. At the end of December he appealed to Conway for the reduction of an exorbitant demand made

[1] The surprise at Eliot's turning against Buckingham in this Parliament, noticed by the Venetian Ambassador, as quoted by Ranke, *Engl. Gesch.*, ii. 103, is one more piece of evidence that he never uttered the speech attributed to him in the *Negotium Posterorum*.

[2] The Commissioners at Plymouth to the Council, Jan. 4; *S. P. Dom.*, xviii. 7.

CHAP. XI.

1625. upon his father-in-law by a Privy seal, and the wrong was immediately redressed by a special resolution of the Council.[1] A little later he wrote to request Pembroke, the Lord Lieutenant of Cornwall, for a Deputy Lieutenancy which was reported to be vacant, and his request would have been immediately granted but for the discovery that there had been no foundation for the report.[2]

1626. Feb. 10. Eliot in the new Parliament. Plainly, therefore, there was no expectation of any opposition from Eliot; and it is possible that if Charles had met Parliament in a different spirit—if he had made the slightest acknowledgment of error, and had courted enquiry instead of merely asking for money—Eliot's first words in the new House might have been other than they were. As it was, his whole soul was moved by that which was passing before his eyes. To the high-hearted, patriotic man it was bad enough that the failures of the past should bring no warnings for the future. But it was still worse that religion should be made the stalking-horse for political objects, and that Parliament should be asked to legislate for the Church as an inducement towards a grant of money.

Eliot demands enquiry into the Cadiz voyage, When Eliot rose, therefore, it was to ask that enquiry into past disasters should precede present supply. The accounts of the expenditure of the subsidies voted in 1624 must be laid fully before the House. Then, rising with the occasion, and feeling that this would not be enough, "Sir," he cried, "I beseech you cast your eyes about! View the state we are in! Consider the loss we have received! Weigh the wrecked and ruined honour of our nation! O the incomparable hopes of our most excellent sovereign checked in

[1] *Council Register*, Jan. 5. Eliot's letter to Conway, Dec. 31; *S. P. Dom.*, xii. 95, is printed by Mr. Forster, *Sir J. Eliot*, i. 272.

[2] Eliot to his agent in London, Jan. 16; *S. P. Dom.*, xviii. 68. Bagg to ——, March (?); *Notes and Queries*, 4th ser., x. 325.

CHAP. XI.
1626. Feb. 10.

their first design! Search the preparation. Examine the going forth. Let your wisdoms travel through the whole action, to discern the fault, to know the faulty. For I presume to say, though no man undertook it, you would find the ancient genius of this kingdom rise up to be the accuser. Is the reputation and glory of our nation of a small value? Are the walls and bulwarks of our kingdom of no esteem? Are the numberless lives of our lost men not to be regarded? I know it cannot so harbour in an English thought. Our honour is ruined, our ships are sunk, our men perished; not by the sword, not by the enemy, not by chance; but, as the strongest predictions had discerned and made it apparent beforehand, by those we trust. Sir, I could lose myself in this complaint, the miseries, the calamities which our Western parts have both seen, and still feel, strike so strong an apprehension on me."

and into earlier disasters.

At this point, remembering doubtless that the special circumstances which gave a right of enquiring into the expenditure of the subsidies of 1624 did not convey a right of enquiry into the expenditure of any other money, Eliot paused for a moment, making, with the skill of a consummate orator, the half retractation which he was about to make an excuse for striking a yet harder blow. "Perchance, Sir," he proceeded, "it will be said that this concerns us not, that our money was long since spent in other actions. To prevent such objection I will make this answer, that I know nothing so preposterous[1] or good in those former actions that may extenuate, much less excuse, the faults of this. Upon both particulars, therefore, I will contract my motion; this of the war account, and that of the King's estate."

[1] So preferable or excellent.

CHAP. XI.
1626. Feb. 10.

These questions, in short, enquiry into the past and provision for the future, should be discussed in special committees. Till this had been done, nothing should be said about the King's supply. The common cause must have the precedence.[1]

Weight of the speech.

In spite, therefore, of the relegation of the leaders of the opposition to their respective shires, a voice had been raised to resume the work which they had left unfinished. Instinctively Eliot had taken up ground which was unassailable. There was no personal attack upon Buckingham. The Lord Admiral's name had not even been mentioned. But there had been a plain assertion of the right of the Commons to ascertain by every means in their power whether the money for which they were asked would be used for the benefit of the country. No doubt such an enquiry contained within itself the germs of a mighty revolution. The Commons had certainly not been accustomed thus to pry into the secret actions of Henry VIII. or Elizabeth. But even if the Commons were as yet hardly fitted to occupy the place of sovereignty, it was not their fault that circumstances had changed, or that there was good reason for withdrawing from Charles I. the confidence which their fathers had reposed in his predecessors.

Feb. 6. Laud's sermon.

It is possible that Eliot may have been irritated to some extent by the sermon preached by Laud at the opening of the session. "Jerusalem," the Bishop of St. Davids had told his hearers, "is builded as a city that is compact together." By unity alone could Church or State resist its foes. And for the State the centre of unity was in the King. It was his to do judgment and justice, to appoint magistrates and to protect the oppressed. It was the part of the nation to surround him with loving reverence. "And never

[1] Forster, *Sir J. Eliot*, i. 285.

fear him," he said of Charles, "for God is with him. He will not depart from God's service; nor from the honourable care of his people; nor from [1] wise managing of his treasure; he will never undermine his own house, nor give his people just cause to be jealous of a shaking foundation." [2]

1626. Feb. 6.

Those who have been engaged in tracing out Charles's errors and failures will find it hard to understand how such words could be applied to him by any sane man. But the difficulty is not a great one. Laud was an ecclesiastic, not a statesman. He saw the conscientiousness of Charles, his wish to do right, and he took it for granted that his conduct was as prudent as his intentions were upright. Having every reason to doubt the fairness of the House of Commons towards the clergy of his own opinions, he thought that they were equally unfair in their opposition in political matters.

Laud's devotion to Charles.

Laud had been grieved at the resolution which the King had taken to withdraw his objection to the examination of Montague's opinions, on the ground that he was one of the Royal Chaplains. On January 16 four Bishops, amongst whom were Andrewes and Laud, having been asked to investigate the question, reported that Montague's book was agreeable to the doctrine of the Church of England, and had recommended Charles to prohibit all further controversy on the disputed points.[3] How Montague would fare in the House of Commons there could be no reasonable doubt. On the 11th and 17th a conference was held at Buckingham's house, in which Dr. Preston and Bishop Morton did their best to impugn the doctrines pro-

Feb. 11. The conference about Montague's book.

[1] "for," as printed, but surely it should be "from."

[2] Sermon III., *Laud's Works*, i. 63.

[3] Neile, Andrewes, &c. to Buckingham, Jan. 16; *Harl. MSS.*, 7000, fol. 193.

CHAP. XI. 1626.

pounded in the incriminated books. As far as it is possible to judge from the accounts which have reached us, the assailants failed to make their points good.[1]

In insisting on a complete accordance with the formulas of the Church, they, in many cases, substituted their own interpretation for the obvious meaning of the formulas themselves. Yet in spite of his controversial success, Montague was left to the judgment of Parliament. The House of Commons pronounced strongly against him. But the session was brought to an untimely end before the opinion of the Lords could be taken.

These Church questions would before long attract universal attention. At present the management of the war and the relations between England and the Continental powers were of more immediate interest. The four sub-committees of the Committee for grievances were hard at work, and the one over which Eliot presided was busily occupied in investigating the case of the 'St. Peter of Havre de Grace,' and incidentally in enquiring why England was on the verge of a war with France without any apparent reason.

The 'St. Peter of Havre de Grace.'

The real history of the estrangement between the two Courts was known but to very few. Probably no one except Buckingham and one or two of his confidants had ever heard of the despatches by which Charles had met with icy coldness the overtures of Richelieu, or were acquainted with the course of the dispute about the French prizes. But the re-seizure of the 'St. Peter' was a fact patent to all. The merchants trading with France were in terrors lest reprisals should be made on the other side of the Channel, and the Lord Admiral

Feb. 8. Consternation of the English merchants at its re-seizure.

[1] 'The sum and substance of the Conference.' *Cosin's Works*, ii. 17. Buckingham presided, and certainly showed great shrewdness and ability.

CHAP. XI.

1626

and the Privy Council were besieged with petitions for the release of the ship.[1]

When the ship had been seized, war with France had been imminent. But it was now known in England that the French civil war was at an end, and the English vessels might possibly soon be on their way home. Buckingham had therefore no longer any interest in detaining the prize. He sent for Marten, and asked him what he ought to do. Marten answered cautiously that he had it in his power to detain the ship if he really had fresh evidence against her. Until he had seen the information on which Buckingham relied, he could not say whether it was sufficient or not. On the 15th the merchants' petitions were considered in the Council, and an order was given that, if the owners would enter into bonds to abide the decision of the Court of Admiralty, the ship should be at once released.[2] Soon after this it was discovered that the evidence alleged by Apsley[3] was absolutely worthless, and all further proceedings were tacitly withdrawn. But it was too late. Before the news of the re-seizure of the 'St. Peter' had reached France, the owners of the prize goods which had been sold, being convinced that they had nothing to hope from English justice, had petitioned to their own Courts for redress. On the 7th the Judge of the Admiralty at Paris gave permission to all who had been wronged to seek redress by the seizure of English property in France, and on the 10th a similar order was issued by the Parliament of Rouen.[4]

Feb. 9. Marten consulted.

Release of the 'St. Peter.'

Feb. 7. Reprisals in France.

Feb. 10.

[1] Petition of the merchants, Feb. 8; *S. P Dom.*, xx. 51. Act of Council, Feb. 12; *Council Register.*

[2] Act of Council, Feb. 15; *Council Register.*

[3] Vol. i. 352.

[4] List of proceedings about the ships, undated; Sentence of the Parliament of Rouen, Feb. $\frac{10}{20}$; *S. P. France.* In the subsequent correspondence the seizure of the 'St. Peter' is scarcely mentioned as complained of by the French. The sale of the prize goods is the sore point.

CHAP. XI.

1626.

Through this thicket of confusion, Eliot and his Committee did their best to cut their way. Was it strange if they did not succeed in discovering the truth? It was clear that there was something behind of which they knew nothing. The second detention of the 'St. Peter' required an explanation which had not been vouchsafed to them. How Eliot would have branded with scorn the blunder of selling the prize goods if only he had become aware of the importance which it had in the eyes of the French, we can readily imagine. But the seizure of the 'St. Peter' was all that met his eye, and being in ignorance of the fact that England had been at the time on the brink of a war with France, he had to account for the mystery as best he might. What wonder if he fancied that the Duke had done it all for his own advantage? He knew that some of Buckingham's officers had had charge of valuable articles which had been on board the 'St. Peter,' and that those articles had not been restored. The inference seemed obvious that they had gone to swell the Duke's private fortune, and that, for the sake of his own personal enrichment, he was embroiling the kingdom in an uncalled-for war.

Eliot's Committee considers the seizure to have been made for Buckingham's private ends.

Yet this was far from the truth. It was indeed an unequal contest upon which Eliot had entered. So unwise was the alienation of that State which was ready to become the ally of England, that so true a patriot as Eliot could not but seek to probe the mystery to the bottom. But the mystery could not be probed. Charles and Buckingham had veiled their actions in secrecy as with a cloud. What Eliot learned had to be dragged from unwilling witnesses, themselves knowing but little, and anxious to tell as small a portion of that little as they could. When therefore Attorney-General Heath appeared before the House to defend

March 6. Heath's defence.

1626. March 6.

his patron, he had an easy task before him. He was able to assert that the ship had been seized by the King's directions, and from public motives. It is 'not now,' he said, 'a particular or personal cause, but a national controversy.' It is true that he was not instructed to state what the grounds of that national controversy were. But he was able to add, doubtless with perfect truth, that the seizure of the 'St. Peter' had nothing whatever to do with the embargo at Rouen. Heath's argument was successful with the Commons. By a small majority in a not very full House, they voted that the stay of the 'St. Peter' was not a grievance.[1]

Charles determined to strike whilst the iron was hot. On the very day on which Heath was pleading before the Commons, the Lords were asked to take into consideration the state of the realm. Already in a quiet way the Peers had given signs that they had no intention of being Buckingham's humble servants. Finding that the Duke held no less than thirteen proxies, the independent Lords, after a debate in which almost every official member spoke against them,[2] carried an order that for the future no Peer should hold more than two proxies. But restlessness under Buckingham's supremacy did not as yet imply readiness to reject a proposal brought to them with the authority of the Crown, and the House at once appointed a Committee to take into consideration the question propounded. The next morning the Committee reported that it was advisable to set forth one fleet against Spain, and another for the defence of the English coast, and to maintain the armies of Mansfeld and the King of Denmark.[3]

Feb. 25. Order about proxies in the House of Lords.

March 7. The Peers consider the state of the realm.

[1] *Commons' Journals*, i. 831.
[2] *Elsing's Notes.*
[3] *Lords' Journals*, iii. 517, 519.

CHAP. XI.

1626. March 7.

With this suggestion the Commons were at once asked to comply. At the conference Buckingham prudently kept himself in the background, and Pembroke and Abbot were put forward to induce the Lower House to assent to the demands of the Government. After detailing the necessities of the fleet and of the Danish army, Pembroke held out hopes that a virtual alliance would be brought about with France.[1]

News from France

In the evening an attempt was made to carry the opinion of the Commons by storm. A hopeful despatch had been received from the ambassadors at Paris. Edward Clerke, the confidential servant of the Duke, went about the streets spreading the news that all difficulties had been removed, and that there was no longer any danger of a dispute with the King of France.[2]

Negotiations at Paris.

It was not Richelieu's fault that a good understanding had not been long ago effected. Though the news of Blainville's exclusion from Court had been very unwelcome to Lewis, no hard language had been used, and Charles's objections to the French scheme of a joint army having been taken unto consideration, a fresh offer was made that the King of France should confine himself to operations in Italy, whilst aiding Charles with money to carry on the war in Germany. On the commercial difficulty the French Government was equally conciliatory. Let the vessels seized on both sides, they said, be mutually restored, and then let there be some friendly arrangement to prevent disputes for the future.[3]

Feb. 21.

Feb. 26.

Charles's wisest course was undoubtedly to accept

[1] Speeches of Abbot and Pembroke, *Harl. MSS.*, 4888, fol. 262.

[2] Blainville to Lewis XIII., March $\frac{7}{17}$; *King's MSS.*, 138, 1316.

[3] Holland and Carleton to Coke, Feb. 21; Holland and Carleton to Coke, Feb. 26; *S. P. France.*

CHAP. XI.

1626.

March 3. Charles punctilious about the French reprisals.

the offer. But he was punctilious and keen to mark offences in others. The sense of injury caused in France by the sale of the prize goods he did not understand. Much less did it enter into his head that the strictness of the English law of prize might not commend itself to a neutral Government. But he discovered that, in the commercial treaty agreed on by Lewis and his father, it was stated that embargoes were not to be laid on either side without previous notice, and he therefore demanded that France, by taking the first step in the restoration of vessels seized, should acknowledge itself to have been in the wrong. Even this was conceded to him, as Lewis himself assured the ambassadors. "I will rely," he said, "upon your promise, and in confidence thereof will ordain a present release. But if in England what you undertake be not faithfully executed, and that such as . . . may be present at the definitive sentence advertise me that my subjects' goods are detained from them, the King my brother must not take it ill if I do the like." This offer the King followed up by sending immediate directions to the Admiral at Rochelle, directing him to send home to England the English ships under his charge, and by promising that the order for removing the embargo should be issued the next morning.[1]

Conciliatory overtures in France.

March 4.

Such was the news which Clerke was spreading about the streets of London on the evening of March 7. But Charles was in a temper which tried the friendliness of the French Government to the utmost. In his anxiety to prove his Protestantism, he had inflicted a fresh blow upon Blainville which was not likely to make his relations easier with the ambassador's master. Blainville's lodgings were in Durham House, one of the mansions which in those days stood between the Strand

[1] Holland and Carleton to Conway, March 3, 5; *S. P. France.*

CHAP. XI. 1626. Feb.

and the river. It was the house where Raleigh had lived in the days of his splendour, and which was so extensive that the Bishop of Durham contented himself with occupying a small portion. A large part was given over to the French embassy. Blainville had his private chapel, and the mass, when celebrated there, was attended by throngs of the Catholics of London. To this abuse, as he considered it, Charles was determined to put an end. He gave orders to the Council to see that it was no longer tolerated, and on the morning of Sunday, February 26, a strong body of constables was posted at the gates, after mass had begun, with directions to seize all English subjects as they came out.

The mass at Durham House.

Interference with the attendance of English Catholics.

When the capture began it was impossible for the French gentlemen of the ambassador's suite to restrain their impatience. Charging upon the constables sword in hand, they came to the succour of their English friends. In the scuffle which ensued two men were injured, and one was dragged into the courtyard and borne in triumph before the window at which the ambassador was standing. By this time the noise of the tumult had attracted attention outside, and the population of the neighbourhood hurried up to take part in the fray. Fortunately the Bishop of Durham came up in time to part the combatants before further mischief was done.

Tumult which ensues.

Blainville of course was furious. "I wish," he said to the Bishop, as soon as he caught sight of him, "that my followers had killed the officers. The King my master will require reason for that which has been done against the law of nations."[1]

Blainville's anger.

As a matter of law, Charles was plainly within his rights. His prudence in raising so irritating a question

[1] A true relation, &c.; *S. P. Dom.*, xxi. 63.

is not so certain. And in the beginning of March, the very days in which matters were taking a favourable turn at Paris, he contrived, probably unconsciously, again to give offence to the French Court. He had long regarded Arundel with suspicion. In the last Parliament he had been suspected of taking part in the opposition against Buckingham, and, like Williams and Wentworth, he had no sympathy with the warlike ardour of the King and his chief adviser. At the opening of the new Parliament, alone amongst the Privy Councillors he had sided with the independent Peers in the affair of the proxies, and it was not long before Charles found him interfering with his wishes on a more personal question.

March. Arundel's opposition.

Arundel's eldest son, Lord Maltravers, had fallen in love with Elizabeth Stuart, sister of the young Duke of Lennox, and niece of the Lord Steward of James I. His affection was warmly reciprocated. But Charles had other views, and he claimed, as head of her house, to dispose of her hand as he pleased. The Earl of Argyle, a professed Roman Catholic, had long been an exile from his native country, and had spent many years of his life in the military service of the King of Spain. His son and heir, Lord Lorne, who was one day to be Charles's bitterest enemy as the Covenanting Marquis of Argyle, was not inclined to follow in his father's steps; and Charles hoped that by marrying him into a family so closely connected with the Court as that of Lennox, he might acquire an influence over his future life. But whilst Charles was scheming the lovers were acting. Lady Arundel favoured her son's pretensions, and Lady Arundel was not a woman accustomed to be thwarted. A clandestine marriage was hurried on, and, when it was too late to interfere, Arundel was told by his wife that he had better be

His son's marriage

CHAP. XI. 1626.

himself the person to carry the news to the King, as he might safely assert that he had known nothing of the plot before it was carried into execution.[1]

Charles was at first not inclined to be very hard upon the Earl. But Arundel, or some one amongst his friends, thought it worth while to enlist the Queen's sympathy on his behalf. Either Charles was jealous of his wife's interference, or he saw in it some fresh plot of the detested Blainville. He at once ordered that Arundel should no longer be admitted to the meetings of the Council; and a fresh application from the Queen was followed by an order for his imprisonment in the Tower, whilst the ladies who had favoured the marriage were detained in various places of confinement.[2]

March 4. Arundel sequestered from the Council.

March 5. Sent to the Tower.

Charles's continued jealousy of the Queen did not augur well for the chances of a better understanding with her brother. Into the recesses of Charles's councils indeed we have no means of penetrating. But the difficulties thrown in the way of the French alliance, the personal quarrel with Blainville, the punctilious hesitation about the release of the prizes, the demand to be recognised as a mediator between Lewis and his subjects, all bear unmistakably the impress of Charles's quickness to take offence and reluctance to forget a real or fancied injury. Buckingham was more likely to snatch at the chance of bringing a French army into the field; and the one glimpse which we have of him during these days shows him anxiously desiring permission to go as ambassador to France, no doubt to

Charles, not Buckingham, the cause of the difficulties with France.

[1] Meddus to Mead, March 10; *Court and Times*, i. 86. D'Ewes to Stuteville, March; *Harl. MSS.*, 383, fol. 26.

[2] *Council Register*, March 4. Arundel to Lady Maltravers, March 5; *Harl. MSS.*, 1581, fol. 390. Blainville to Lewis XIII., March $\frac{7}{17}$; Blainville to the Bishop of Mende, March $\frac{7}{17}$; *King's MSS.*, 138, 1316, 1333.

CHAP. XI.

cement that friendly understanding which his master was doing everything to thwart.[1]

1626.

But whatever the truth may have been, it would have been hard to persuade the Commons that Buckingham was not wholly at fault. Partly from motives of policy, still more perhaps from traditional loyalty of disposition, the maxim that the King could do no wrong was deeply imprinted on their hearts. If they had failed to extract the whole truth about the French prizes, they hoped to be more successful in extracting from the council of war the advice which its members had given about the disposal of the subsidies voted in 1624, wishing probably to know whether Mansfeld's disastrous expedition had received the approbation of competent military authorities.[2]

March 3. Enquiry directed by the Commons to the council of war.

The House was, however, destined to disappointment. Heath, having been consulted by the King, gave it as his opinion that though under the unusual provisions of the act in question, the Commons would be justified in asking whether the councillors had issued warrants for any expenditure not provided for

Heath's opinion.

[1] Holland to Buckingham, March $\frac{7}{17}$; *S. P. France.*

[2] In the *Eliot Notes* the proceedings in committee are given usually without the speaker's name. But the question of misemployment of the subsidies of 1624 is continually recurring in a way which fully bears out my view that the complaint was that they had been employed in too extensive warfare. Thus, on Feb. 27, "That the council of war may first satisfy the House what course hath been taken about the four ends, and what money hath been expended about fortifying our coasts." On Feb. 28, a cause of the war is said to be 'failing in the observation of the ratio [?] for the four ends in the statute 21° Ja.' On the 6th of March some one said 'that we gave our money for defence of our coasts.' The questions on which the council of war were to be examined, are, 'Whether they met according to the act, and how often, and when? What they advised and directed, and whether that advice were followed, or how hindered?' Upon the 17th of March it was voted that 'the misemploying of the money given 21 Ja., and the not employing it to the four ends, &c.,' a cause.

CHAP. XI.

1626. March.

in the act, they would not be justified in asking what advice any individual councillor had given, or to require them in any way to inculpate a third party by asking whether the advice given had or had not been followed. The acts of the councillors, in short, were a fair subject for investigation, not their opinions.

March 7. The councillors refuse to reply.

The doctrine thus laid down is in our own day accepted by all parties in the State. It never occurs to the most inquisitive member of Parliament to ask what advice has been given in the privacy of the Cabinet. But if it has become possible to cover advice with a wise secrecy, it is because all those who act have submitted to a complete responsibility to Parliament for their actions. It was not without reason that when the councillors answered in accordance with Heath's opinion, the Commons felt that the partial satisfaction offered to them was illusory. In fact, the special stipulations of the act of 1624 had been the beginning of a great change. It had recognised that certain special officials were to be responsible to Parliament as well as to the Crown. But it had effected either too much or too little, and the Commons were naturally of opinion that it had effected too little. If they came to the conclusion that the money had been spent on improper objects, how could they call to account the councillors, who might have acted under pressure or misrepresentation, whilst Buckingham was placed beyond enquiry?

The Commons persist.

The first thought of the Commons was to persist in their original demand. They informed each councillor that two days would be granted him for consideration, and that he would then be called upon individually to reply to the questions put to him.[1]

[1] Question and Answer, March 3 and 7; Heath's opinion, March; *S. P. Dom.*, xxii. 16, 17, 18, 19.

CHAP. XI.

1626.

So strong was the current of feeling, that the old Earl of Totness—as Sir George Carew, the Lord President of Munster in Elizabeth's days, and himself now one of the councillors of war—thought that it was better that he and his fellows should bear the displeasure of the Commons than that the King's subsidies should be refused. "I beseech your Majesty," he said, "to regard your own ends. For it is better that we should suffer imprisonment than be the occasion of missing necessary subsidies, or breed any difference between you and the House of Commons. For we cannot do you better service." It was well and bravely spoken. But Charles saw plainly that his own authority was at stake. "Let them do what they list," he answered proudly. "You shall not go to the Tower. It is not you that they aim at, but it is me upon whom they make inquisition. And for subsidies, that will not hinder it. Gold may be bought too dear, and I thank you for your offer."[1]

March 9. Interview between the King and Totness.

The council, therefore, returned much the same answer as before, and the Commons, finding that no further information was to be had, desisted from their enquiry.[2]

March 11. Final answer of the council of war.

As was usually the case, Charles was right on the

[1] Account by Totness, March 9; *S. P. Dom.*, xxii. 51.

[2] It has hitherto been supposed that the King rested his objection simply on the impropriety of allowing the House to call his officers to account. Charles, however, acknowledged the right of the Commons to enquire into the employment of the money. "His Majesty," so stands the form of answer finally agreed on, "hath given us leave to give an account of our warrants to the Treasurers for the disbursements of the subsidies given last in the time of his Royal Father, which is clearly warranted by the Act of Parliament. But concerning our counsels, and the following thereof, his Majesty hath directly forbidden us to give any account, as being against his service to divulge those secrets, and expressly against our oath as councillors of war." Form of answer settled, with alterations, in Coke's letter; *S. P. Dom.*, ii. 57; i. 60.

CHAP. XI.

1626. March 11.

narrow technical view of the transaction, and he was right in perceiving that, if there was to be a general enquiry into the past, his own authority would suffer grievously. A complete revolution was implied in the demand made upon him. And yet, after all that had happened, after the disaster which had attended Mansfeld's army, and the failure which had attended the expedition to Cadiz, after the French alliance, of which he had boasted so loudly, was changing, for some mysterious reason, into hardly-concealed hostility, was it reasonable to ask the Commons to entrust large sums to his wisdom and discretion, without that full and searching enquiry into the past, by which alone confidence once shaken could be restored?

March 10. Supply demanded.

Yet this is what Charles seriously proposed to do. The announcement by Pembroke on the 7th, and the rumours spread abroad by Clerke in the same evening, had produced no effect. On the 10th Weston delivered a message asking for an immediate supply for the necessities of state. The Commons were to vote the money, and to ask no questions.[1]

Difficult position of the Commons.

It was absolutely impossible that the Commons should accept the ignominious position thus assigned to them. And yet it was hard to say what they were to do. Since the old turbulent days when an adverse vote in Parliament had been enforced by actual or possible insurrection, ministerial responsibility had been a thing unheard of. The officers of the Crown under the Tudors were simply the agents of the sovereign, responsible for their conduct to him alone.

Two courses before them.

It may be that the straightforward way would have been the best in the end, and that a simple address assuring the King that no money could be voted till he

[1] Message, March 10; *Harl. MSS.*, 161, fol. 49.

1626. March 10.

could inspire the House with confidence that it would be wisely expended, would have placed the Commons in a position less logically assailable than any other. But it was certain that such a course would give deep offence to Charles, and, on the other hand, a path was open which, strewed as it was with hidden dangers, appeared to offer a far more inviting prospect.

When men's minds are in a state of tension, it often happens that the thought with which all are occupied rises to the lips of some insignificant person, less able than others to weigh the full import of his words. It was thus that when the supply proposed by Pembroke was being discussed, Coke's son Clement, hitherto chiefly known for his quarrelsome disposition, flung out the taunt, "It is better to die by an enemy than to suffer at home." And now that the King had pressed his demand by Weston, Dr. Turner, a man otherwise of no note, told the House that the cause of all their grievances was 'that great man, the Duke of Buckingham.' Common fame had supplied him with certain queries which called for an answer. Had the Duke guarded the seas against pirates? Had he not, by the appointment of unworthy officers, caused the failure of the expedition to Cadiz? Had he not engrossed a large part of the Crown lands to himself, his friends, and his relations? Had he not sold places of judicature and titles of honour? Was he not dangerous to the State, his mother and his father-in-law being Recusants? Was it fit that he should, in his own person, enjoy so many great offices? [1]

Clement Coke's words.

March 11. Dr. Turner's queries.

It has generally been supposed that the questions thus put had been placed in Turner's mouth by others.

[1] I have abbreviated the Report in *Add. MSS.*, 22,474, fol. 11, which looks more like words actually spoken than that given in Rushworth.

CHAP. XI.

1626. March 11.

However that may have been, it marks a change of front on the part of the opposition. If there were no recent precedents for enquiring into the administrative acts of high officials, there were the precedents of Bacon and Middlesex for enquiring into their personal delinquencies. For some days a multitude of facts damaging to Buckingham had been discovered by the various committees, and it may have seemed a more hopeful task to induce Charles to abandon a criminal of whose real character he had been ignorant, than to surrender a minister to whose policy he had given his constant approval.

Personal attack upon Buckingham.

If any such calculation as this passed over the minds of the leading members, if the step which they were prepared to take was the fruit of anything more than an honest indignation against the man whom they had come to regard as a criminal indeed, they had not taken into account the extent to which Charles had given, not merely his name, but his cordial support, to Buckingham's proceedings. The attack upon his friend roused him to indignation, and he sent to demand justice upon Coke and Turner. At the same time the Commons took their stand against the King on another most important principle. They directed the King's Counsel to bring in a Tonnage and Poundage Bill within a week, unless they wished to see the farmers of the Customs called upon to give account by what authority those duties had been levied.[1]

March 14. Charles asks for justice.

Tonnage and poundage.

Question of ministerial responsibility.

It would evidently not be easy to establish ministerial responsibllity. With a sovereign who does not pretend to govern, or with a sovereign who is ready to make a scapegoat of an unpopular servant, it presents no difficulty. But Charles at the same time claimed to

[1] *Rushworth*, i. 218; *Add. MSS.*, 22, 474, fol. 12. *Commons' Journals*, i. 836.

CHAP. XI.

1626. March 15.

rule the State, and was too conscientious to throw over a minister whom he believed to have been unjustly accused. It needed two revolutions to make the doctrine current in England. Before the Commons could succeed in making ministers responsible, they had to re-establish in fact, if not in theory, the responsibility of the Crown.

Loyal declarations of the Commons.

Under Eliot's guidance the House did its best to assure the King of its loyalty to himself. Coke and Turner were ordered to explain their words, and the King was assured that there was no wish to deprive him of the means necessary for carrying on a war. The wish of the Commons was to make him 'safe at home and feared abroad.' But they claimed a right to search out the causes of his wants, and to propose such remedies as they might think fitting.[1]

March 15. The King's answer.

They had not long to wait for his answer. Summoning them to Whitehall, Charles spoke his mind plainly. "Mr. Speaker," he said, "here is much time spent in enquiring after grievances. I would have that last, and more time bestowed in preventing and redressing them. I thank you all for your kind offer of supply in general, but I desire you to descend to particulars, and consider of your time and measure. For it concerneth yourselves, who are like first to feel it, if it be too short.

"But some there are—I will not say all—that do make enquiry into the proceedings, not of any ordinary servant, but of one that is most near unto me. It hath been said, 'What shall be done to the man whom the King delighteth to honour?' But now it is the labour of some to seek what may be done against the man whom the King thinks fit to be honoured.

"In a former time, when he was an instrument to

[1] *Rushworth*, i. 216.

CHAP. XI.

1626. March 16.

break the treaties, you held him worthy of all that was conferred upon him by my father. Since that time he hath done nothing but in prosecution of what was then resolved on, and hath engaged himself, his friends, and his estate for my service, and hath done his uttermost to set it forwards; and yet you question him. And for some particulars wherewith he hath been pressed; however he hath made his answer, certain it is that I did command him to do what he hath done therein. I would not have the House to question my servants, much less one that is so near me. And therefore I hope I shall find justice at your hands to punish such as shall offend in that kind."

He hoped, Charles concluded by saying, they would do him right with respect to Coke as well as to Turner. To their just grievances he would always be ready to listen.[1]

That the whole administration was one great grievance Charles could not be brought to understand. But this was precisely the belief to which the House was rapidly coming. And now Eliot took the lead in counselling that there should be no drawing back. 'We have had a representation of great fear,' he cried, 'but I hope it shall not darken our understandings.'[2] Coke might explain away his words. Turner, stricken with illness, perhaps the result of anxiety, might shrink back into the obscurity from which he had emerged for a moment.[3] But the thought which they had

March 17. Eliot's counsel.

[1] I quote the speech from a copy in *Add. MSS.*, 22,474, fol. 19, which again looks more like the words actually spoken than the form given by Rushworth.

[2] Mr. Forster (*Sir J. Eliot*, i. 500) has happily restored this exclamation to its proper place.

[3] I cannot share the opinion of those who speak disparagingly of Dr. Turner's letter. It seems to me a manly and outspoken production. He was afterwards one of the Straffordians, so that he can hardly have been a timid man.

expressed had become the common property of the House.

During the following days the Committees were busily at work accumulating fresh evidence against Buckingham. Charles impatiently urged the immediate consideration of supply, and after the House had once more listened to an explanation of the necessities of the Exchequer from Sir John Coke,[1] the 27th was fixed as the day for taking the subject into consideration. On the 29th, Buckingham, if he wished, might make answer to the charges collecting against him.

Supply again demanded.

On the 27th, after a persuasive speech from Rudyerd, Eliot rose. Commencing with a graceful allusion to the day, as the first anniversary of the King's accession, he threw aside the argument which had been so often the refuge of timid reasoners in the last Parliament, that the subject was unable to give. The only question, he justly argued, was whether the subject was willing to give. And how could men be willing when one miscarriage had followed another, and when these disastrous enterprises 'were undertaken, if not planned and made, by that great lord the Duke of Buckingham.'

March 27. Eliot's speech.

Foreign miscarriages.

Nor were affairs at home much better. "What oppressions have been practised," the orator continued, "are too visible; not only oppressions of the subject, but oppressions on the King. His treasures are exhausted, his revenues are consumed, as well as the treasures and abilities of the subject; and though many hands are exercised, and divers have their gleanings, the harvest and great gathering comes to one. For he it is that must protect the rest. His countenance draws all others to him as his tributaries; and

Domestic oppressions.

[1] *Add. MSS.*, 22,474, fol. 13.

CHAP. XI.

1626. March 27.

by that they are enforced, not only to pillage for themselves but for him, and to the full proportion of his avarice and ambition. This makes the abuse and injury the greater. This cannot but dishearten, this cannot but discourage, all men well affected, all men well disposed to the advancement and happiness of the King. Nor, without some reformation in these things, do I know what wills or what abilities men can have to give a new supply."

Precedents quoted.

Yet it was not his intention to dissuade them from granting supply. He had two precedents to quote. In the reign of Henry III., Hubert de Burgh, 'a favourite never to be paralleled but now, having been the only minion both to the King then living and to his father which was dead,' had been removed from office, and supply, refused before, was at once granted. "The second precedent," he then said, "was in 10th of Richard II.; and herein I shall desire you to observe the extraordinary likeness of some particulars. First, for the placing and displacing of great officers. Then within the space of two years, the treasurer was changed twice, the chancellor thrice, and so of others; so that great officers could hardly sit to be warmed in their places. Now you can ask yourselves how it is at present, and how many shifts, changes, and re-changes this kingdom can instance in like time to parallel with that. Secondly, as to moneys. I find that then there had been moneys previously granted and not accounted for; and you know that so it is yet with us. Thirdly, there were new aids required and urged by means of a declaration of the King's occasions and estate; and this likewise, as we know, agrees with our condition. Yet then, because of these and other exceptions made against De la Pole, the Earl of Suffolk, the minion of that time, of whom it was said that he misadvised the

CHAP. XI.

1626. March.

King, misemployed his treasures, and introverted his revenues, the supply demanded was refused, until, upon the petition of the Commons, he was removed both from his offices and the Court."

Then, after a bitter reference to the Crown "jewels, the pride and glory of this kingdom," now offered in vain to the merchants of Amsterdam, Eliot concluded by proposing that the resolution for the three subsidies and three fifteenths asked for by Rudyerd should be passed, but that it should not be converted into a bill till their grievances had been redressed. The position thus pointed out was at once taken up by the House.[1]

Charles not to be won.

It was the misfortune of the situation that unless Charles had been other than he was, he could not accept the hand thus offered to him. Believing, and it may safely be added, being justified in believing that Buckingham's character was not that compound of avarice and self-seeking which had been described by Eliot, his apprehension was too dull to realise the full meaning of the late disasters, or to understand the state of mind into which they would throw a patriotic Englishman anxious to fathom the causes of his country's misfortunes. Evils, if they existed at all, if they were not the result of mere ill-luck or of the parsimony of former Parliaments, were to be brought before his notice in a respectful and decorous fashion. It never occurred to him that, if Buckingham was well-intentioned, he might be vain, rash, and incapable, still less, that his own ability for government was no greater than that of his minister.

To such a man it would seem a plain duty to hold his own. He knew enough of history to be aware that the fall of Hubert de Burgh had been followed by the insurrection of Simon de Montfort, and the fall

[1] Forster, *Sir J. Eliot*, i. 515.

CHAP. XI.

1626. March 29.

of Michael de la Pole by the revolution which placed Henry IV. on the throne. He would take care that he would guard in another fashion the Crown which he had received from his father. That the Crown itself was attacked he had no doubt whatever. The leaders of the Commons, he fancied, were taking advantage of the necessities of the position into which their advice had brought him, to raise themselves above the throne.

Such was the thought with which he summoned the Commons into his presence on the 29th, the day on which Buckingham had been invited to give an account of his proceedings to the House. As soon as they appeared they were addressed by Coventry. The King, said the Lord Keeper, would have them to understand the difference between liberty of counsel and liberty of control. Not only had they refrained from censuring Coke and Turner, but they had followed in the steps of the latter by founding their charges upon common fame. In their attack upon Buckingham they had assailed the honour of the King and the King's father, and they had refused to trust him with the reformation of abuses. It was therefore his Majesty's express command that they should desist from this unparliamentary inquisition, and commit their real grievances to the wisdom and justice of the King. Further, he was to say that the supply proposed was insufficient, and that the mode in which it had been offered was dishonouring to his Majesty. If they could not give a better answer in three days, he could not promise that the session would continue longer.

Coventry's declaration.

Charles had a few words of his own to add. "Now," he said, after reminding his hearers that he had entered upon the war in compliance with their advice, "now that you have all things according to

Additions by the King.

your wishes, and that I am so far engaged that you think there is no retreat, now you begin to set the dice, and make your own game. But I pray you to be not deceived; it is not a Parliamentary way, nor it is not a way to deal with a king. Mr. Coke told you it was better to be eaten up by a foreign enemy than to be destroyed at home. Indeed, I think it more honour for a king to be invaded and almost destroyed by a foreign enemy, than to be despised by his own subjects. Remember, that Parliaments are altogether in my power for their calling, sitting, and dissolution; therefore, as I find the fruits of them good or evil, they are to continue, or not to be."[1]

Weakness of his position.

Not so! Precedent might be met by precedent, and the history of the Constitution might be ransacked for evidence that England had, at one time or another, been either almost a republic or almost an absolute monarchy. But the right of control, as opposed to the mere right of giving counsel, was not to be won or defended by such arguments as these. In the long run it would lie with those by whom it was best deserved.

March 30. Eliot proposes a remonstance.

The Commons, moved as they were by grave necessity, stood firm. At Eliot's advice they resolved to draw up a remonstrance, to explain their position to the King.[2] But before the resolution could take effect they were summoned to a conference to hear Buckingham explain away Charles's threat of immediate dissolution, and announce that a Committee was to be selected by the King from both Houses to consider the state of the finances.

Buckingham vindicates himself.

Buckingham did not stop here. With magnificent assurance he proceeded to draw a picture of his own actions in startling contrast with that which had been

[1] *Parl. Hist.*, ii. 56.

[2] Forster, *Sir J. Eliot*, i. 529.

CHAP. XI. 1626.

presented by Eliot three days before. He told how eagerly after his return from Spain he had thrown himself into the business of the State, of his unceasing efforts to carry out the warlike policy of Parliament, frustrated, alas! by accident or by the faults of others. Then, after an assurance from Conway that nothing of all this had been done without counsel, he again rose to tell the true story of the ships which had been used against Rochelle, revealing the secret that all the solemn orders and injunctions into which the Commons had been so laboriously enquiring were a mere farce. He had, he said, 'proceeded with art,' and had done his best to avert the surrender of the ships. If he had not succeeded in this, everything had turned out for the best for the Huguenots, 'for the King of France thereby breaking his word, gave just occasion for my master to intercede a peace for them, which is obtained, and our ships are coming home.'

Tells the truth about the ships.

After a few words from Pembroke, adding that at the time when the ships were surrendered it was believed that they would be used against Genoa, the meeting came to an end.[1] Of the effect which this astounding revelation produced at the time we have no information. But as the Commons never took the slightest notice of what they had heard, it may be concluded that they disbelieved the entire story. How indeed could they be assured that the man who openly boasted that he had cheated the King of France would not, on some future occasion, take credit for having cheated them. At all events they returned to their own House, resolved to go on with the remonstrance in which they were to vindicate their claim to call in question the highest subjects who were found grievous

Effect of this revelation.

April 4. Remonstrance of the Commons.

[1] Our knowledge of this conference has hitherto ended with Conway's speech. But the whole can now be read in *Add. MSS.*, 22,474, fol. 22 b–31 b.

to the Commonwealth. On April 4 it was presented to Charles, and at his request they adjourned at once for the Easter recess, to give him time to reconsider his position.

April 13. They are allowed to go on.

When the House reassembled on the 13th they found that no further obstacle was to be opposed to their proceedings. The King advised them to lay aside lesser things for greater ;[1] but further than that he did not go.

Probable motives of Charles.

Charles's motives for this change of language are mere matter for conjecture. But on the whole it is most probable that Buckingham's defence appeared to him to be so entirely conclusive that he fancied that, unless he provoked the Commons by opposition, it could not fail in having its fitting effect.[2]

April 17. Proceedings in the House.

In these expectations, if he ever really entertained them, Charles was speedily to be undeceived. On the 17th a sub-committee met to discover the cause of causes, or, in other words, to fix the grievances upon Buckingham, and on the 18th a Committee of the whole House was ordered to consider the evils, causes, and remedies.

April 18. Carleton's narrative.

In order that this Committee might be freed from the fear of an impending war with France, Carleton, who had just returned from his embassy, was directed to give an account of the position of affairs. Besides telling how the 'Vanguard' and its comrades would soon be back, and how the order for the release of the English ships and goods had been granted, he had to tell of the hope of co-operation with France upon the Continent. All now, he said, rested on his Majesty's

[1] Weston's message, *Sloane MSS.*, 1710, fol. 289.

[2] "And for his own particular, the Duke gave so pertinent answers to those things which were cast upon him for faults, as I conceive the greatest part, and most indifferent men went away well satisfied." Conway to Wake, April 14; *S. P. Venice.*

CHAP. XI.

1626.

answer to the French King's proposals, 'and the King resteth upon the Parliament.'

April 22. Persistence of the Commons.

Either, however, the Commons disbelieved Carleton's story, or they considered it irrelevant to the point at issue. They went steadily on with the charges against the Duke, and they replied to a fresh message demanding an increase of the subsidies voted, unless they wished his Majesty to 'be driven to change his counsels,'

April 20.

by a resolution that they would go on with the matter in hand forenoon and afternoon, so as to be able to take the King's wish into consideration on the 25th.

By this time the charges against Buckingham were in so forward a state that it was necessary to clear the way for them by considering the objections which had been raised to the ground upon which they were

Proceeding on common fame.

based. For many weeks the whole band of courtiers had been sneering at those who were attacking a minister upon mere common fame, as if the House had based its action upon rumour alone. One morning's debate sufficed to blow the fiction to the winds. Eliot, and Pym, and Selden were not the men to ask the House of Lords to accept the gossip of Paul's Walk as evidence against the meanest Englishman alive. The difficulty, such as it was, was of a purely technical character. In the cases of Bacon and Middlesex enquiry had been preceded by the presentation of a petition from some person who felt himself aggrieved. The question was whether the House could institute an enquiry when no private person had complained. In either case the real justification of the action taken would be the enquiry conducted by the House, and, in deciding that a petition was unnecessary, the Commons undoubtedly decided in accordance with the dictates of common sense. "Else," as Selden argued, "no great man shall, for fear of danger, be accused by

any particular man." If Buckingham could not be called in question till some one out of the House was hardy enough to appear against him, his opponents within the House might have waited long enough.[1]

May 1. The charges voted.

When this point had once been settled the charges were speedily voted, the one relating to the 'St. Peter of Havre de Grâce' being replaced amongst them. In order to point out distinctly that no attack was intended upon the King, the Commons passed a resolution for a fourth subsidy, to be included in the bill which was to be brought in as soon as grievances had been redressed.

Another subsidy voted.

Whatever Buckingham's faults may have been, history cannot, like the House of Commons, turn away its eyes from the faults of Charles. During these weeks in which he had been struggling to defend his favourite, the French alliance, which he had risked so much to bring to pass, had been melting away before his eyes.

Charles and the French alliance.

March 4. The French Court favourable to the English alliance.

There can be very little doubt that in the beginning of March, Lewis, as well as Richelieu, meant honestly to co-operate with England on the Continent. The terms of the peace were accepted at Rochelle, and orders were sent to the King's commanders to withdraw their troops from before the walls.[2] But there was a large party at the French Court which viewed with grave displeasure a peace with the Huguenots and a war with Spain, and this party had a useful instrument in Du Fargis, the French ambassador at Madrid.

Treaty with Spain prepared by Du Fargis.

Without instructions from his own Government, Du Fargis drew up, in concert with Olivares, the draft of a treaty putting an end to the disputes existing

[1] *Commons' Journals*, i. 844–848.

[2] Lewis XIII. to Blainville, March $\frac{4}{14}$; *King's MSS.*, 138, fol. 1283.

CHAP. XI. 1626. March 4.

between the two monarchies. When it reached Paris the question whether this treaty should be adopted or not formed the battle-field between Richelieu on the one side and the friends of the clergy on the other.

Question of its acceptance.

French historians have much to tell us of the strength of this clerical party, and of the hold which it gained upon the mind of the King. But all this was as true in January as it was true in March. If it did not prevent Lewis from signing the treaty with the Huguenots, why did it prevail upon him to sign the treaty with Spain? The answer is not very difficult to give. If Charles and England had been ready to support the French movement towards hostility with Spain, Du Fargis' treaty would surely have been rejected. But if Charles were lukewarm, or threatening to interfere on behalf of the King's Protestant subjects, then its acceptance would become an act of imperative necessity, not only for Lewis, but even for Richelieu himself. No French Government could prudently engage in war in Italy or Germany, leaving the great seaport on the Atlantic coast to the chances of a hostile occupation by the King of England.

March 7. Charles's treatment of the French Government.

All through March and April Charles was doing his best to throw Lewis into the arms of Spain. On March 7 his ambassadors announced that, in addition to the orders despatched to restore the English ships and to withdraw the troops from Rochelle, a day was fixed for the consideration of the best way of assisting Mansfeld and the King of Denmark, and that in spite of the clamour of the French merchants directions had been given for removing the embargo on English property. Some excuse the ambassadors made for the seizure of the 'St. Peter.' "But," they wrote, "for former proceedings in ill-treatment of the Frenchmen

which were taken in those prizes, in embezzling and selling their goods, in suffering them to live in want and misery whilst their cause was in trial, in delay of justice after his Majesty had resolved of restitution of their goods at Hampton Court, we wish we had been better furnished with matter than we were to answer their complaints, which were made the cause of these reprisals, though not justifiable by the treaties." Yet in spite of all this, Lewis, though asking that Blainville should be admitted to a formal audience, offered to recall him, and to appoint another ambassador of a more conciliatory disposition.[1]

March 8. Question of reciprocity in releasing goods seized.

The next day the ambassadors wrote again. They had been unable to accept the removal of the embargo, because it was granted on condition that they would engage that the French prizes in England should be liberated within three weeks. Surely, Charles should have met such overtures half way. But he refused utterly to believe in the sincerity of the French Government. Instead of giving his ambassadors orders to show signs of friendliness, he left them without instructions about the embargo or the assistance offered to Denmark, expressed his suspicion that the French meant to attack Rochelle, and ordered Holland and Carleton to return to England.[2] So plain was the folly of all this that even the obsequious Conway, for once in his life, raised an objection to the proceedings of his master. He perceived, he informed Buckingham, "that, by the whole scope of the present estate of things, the French King hath no desire to fall in disorder with his Majesty, and that what had passed in Paris declared an inten-

March 16. Charles's suspicions.

[1] Holland and Carleton to Coke, March 7; *S.P. France.*

[2] Holland and Carleton to Conway, March 11; Coke to Holland and Carleton, March 16, 17; *ibid.*

CHAP. XI. 1626.

tion rather to oppose the public enemy than to maintain the broils at home."[1]

For a time it seemed that Conway's advice would be taken. On March 28 the ambassadors came away. In the beginning of April, five ships were released in England. Blainville was received with all ceremony at an audience at which he was to take leave. The deputies of Rochelle, whose presence in England gave umbrage to Lewis, were about to return home.[2] But these bright hopes were but of short continuance. There were fresh seizures of French vessels at sea, and the English goods were still detained in France till better news came from beyond the Channel.[3]

April 19. Blainville received at an audience.

A few seizures more or less might easily have been got over, if there had been any desire to remove the cause of the evil. But Charles maintained steadily that his view of the law of prize was right, and that the French view was wrong. There was no effort made to come to an understanding, any more than any effort was made to come to an understanding about the German war. And as the prospect of a close alliance with England faded away, the French Government were the more reluctant to fulfil the hopes which they had held out to the Huguenots when that alliance appeared to be attainable. One day the deputies from Rochelle were told that Fort Louis could not be demolished, at all events till new fortifications were erected on the Isle of Rhè. They appealed to Charles for aid, and Charles at once replied that he was ready to support them in their lawful demands.[4]

April 27. Doubts entertained in France of the English alliance.

[1] Conway to Buckingham, March; *ibid.*

[2] Blainville to Lewis XIII., March $\frac{19}{29}$; *King's MSS.*, 138, p. 1429.

[3] Lewis to Conway, April 22, 27; *S. P. France.*

[4] Deputies of Rochelle in France to the Deputies in England, $\frac{\text{March } 29}{\text{April } 8}$, April $\frac{5}{15}$; Instructions to Barrett, April 30; *S. P. France.*

Even if there was to be no actual war with England, if there was to be nothing worse than coolness between the two Courts, it was a pressing necessity for Lewis to make up his quarrel with Spain. On April 30, Du Fargis' draft was converted into the treaty of Barcelona. Richelieu gave a consent, doubtless unwillingly enough, but it was a consent which was under the circumstances inevitable. To succeed in the policy which he had adopted, it was necessary that Charles should actively support it. Charles did not support it, and Richelieu, as prompt to seize the conditions of action as Charles was dull, faced round for a time, till he could pursue his own object again without the necessity of asking for the good word of an ally so unintelligent as Charles. The alliance between England and France was at an end. It was but too probable that a war between England and France would not be long in following.

April 30. The peace of Barcelona.

End of the French alliance.

CHAPTER XII.

THE IMPEACHMENT OF THE DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM.

CHAP. XII.

1626. April.

Details of the negotiations with France not generally known.

It was impossible that Parliament should have any real knowledge of the course of negotiations with France. But it can have been no secret that the relations between the two Crowns were anything but satisfactory. It must have been matter of common conversation that Blainville had for some weeks been refused admission to Court, that English ships and goods had been sequestered in France, and that French ships and goods were still being brought as prizes into English ports. There was enough in this to throw serious doubt on Carleton's assertion that the King was only waiting for Parliamentary supplies in order to join France in open war. If this had been the whole truth, why did not Charles give further information of the objects at which he was aiming, and of the means by which he expected to attain them?

Such general distrust of a Government is certain to vent itself in personal attacks upon those of whom it is composed. In the course of the past weeks the Committees of the Commons had been busily bringing together all kinds of charges against Buckingham, thinking that here was to be found the explanation of that which was otherwise so inexplicable. And the House of Lords too, unluckily for Buckingham, had a grievance of its own. Charles had probably forgotten that by sending Arundel to the Tower whilst Parliament was

Case of the Earl of Arundel.

CHAP. XII.

sitting, he might be accused of violating the privileges of the House of Lords. But the Peers were not disposed to be equally forgetful, and, after no long delay, they demanded an account of the absence of a member of their House from his place in Parliament. In the Easter recess Arundel was allowed to exchange his cell in the Tower for confinement in one of his own houses.[1] But, agreeable as the change may have been to himself, it did not affect the grievance of the Peers, and on April 19 they drew up a remonstrance vindicating their right to demand the presence of any member of their House who was not accused of treason, felony, or refusal to give security against breach of the peace.[1]

1626. April. Interference of the House of Lords.

April 19. Their remonstrance.

At this juncture a fresh champion raised his voice on behalf of the privileges of Parliament, a champion whose co-operation was all the more valuable to the leaders of the Lower House, because he could speak with official knowledge of the actions which he denounced, and was not, as they had been, compelled to extract the truth from the mouths of unwilling witnesses.

Bristol appears on the scene.

When he first ascended the throne Charles had missed the opportunity of putting an end gracefully to his long altercation with Bristol. He assured his father's late ambassador that he was quite aware that he had not offended in any matter of honesty. But he could not acquit him of trusting too implicitly to the Spanish ministers. Bristol must therefore acknowledge his error if he wished to be received into favour, though the slightest acknowledgment would be sufficient.

1625. May. Charles's message to Bristol.

Slight as the acknowledgment required was, it was

[1] Joachimi to the States General, April $\frac{15}{25}$; *Add. MSS.*, 17,677, L, fol. 184 b; *Lords' Journals*, iii. 558, 564, 566.

CHAP. XII.

1625. Bristol's confinement continued.

more than Bristol could give, unless he was first convinced that he had committed an error at all. And when once Charles's overtures had been rejected, and Bristol's confinement at Sherborne was maintained, a grievance had been established of which that cool and practised disputant was certain sooner or later to avail himself. For, loose as the notions on the right of imprisonment by prerogative had been, it was difficult to argue that the King was justified in depriving a subject of his liberty on the simple ground that the subject thought that he had been right when the King thought he had been wrong.

June 10. Bristol forbidden to come to Parliament.

Even Charles seems to have had the glimmering of a suspicion that everything was not as it should be. He sent directions to Bristol to abstain from presenting himself at his first Parliament, but he excused himself on the ground that he had as yet had no time to examine the causes of his restraint.

1626. January. He asks to be present at the coronation.

Months passed away, and there were no signs that the requisite leisure would ever be found. Bristol quietly remained at Sherborne till the approaching coronation gave him an excuse for asking for liberty. He also reminded the King that the instructions which he had received commanded him to remain in the confinement in which he had been at James's death. As, however, his late master had ordered his liberation, it was hard to know what was precisely intended.

Charles perhaps thought that Bristol was laughing at him, and flashed into anger. Forgetting that he had already pronounced the Earl to be guiltless of any real offence, he now accused him of attempting to pervert him from his religion when he was in Spain, and of having given his approval to the proposal that the Electoral Prince should be educated at Vienna.

Violent as the King's letter was, it contained no

CHAP. XII.

1626.

intimation of any intention to bring Bristol to trial. The incriminated man saw his advantage. In his reply he plainly showed it to be his opinion that, though he could not, as a subject, demand a trial from his sovereign, the charges which had been brought against him were such as could only be fairly met in open court.[1]

January. Bristol answers that he is ready for a trial.

At any other time Bristol would probably have been compelled to remain quietly at Sherborne without hope of liberty. But Parliament was now again in session, and the Earl, to whom no writ of summons had again been issued, forced Charles's hand by petitioning the Lords to mediate with the King that he might either be brought to trial or allowed his rights as a subject and a Peer.[2]

March 22. He petitions the Lords for his writ.

Here at least Bristol was sure of a favourable hearing. The Peers had already expressed a strong opinion in Arundel's case that the King had no right to deprive their House of the services of any one of its members without bringing him to trial, and a committee to which Bristol's petition was referred reported that there was no instance on record in which a Peer capable of sitting in Parliament had been refused his writ. The King, answered Buckingham, would grant the writ, but he had intimated to Bristol that he did not wish him to make use of it. So transparent a subterfuge was not likely to be acceptable to the Lords. Lord Saye and Sele, always ready to protest against arbitrary proceedings, moved that it should be entered in the Journal Book that, at the Earl's petition, his Majesty sent him the writ;—and no more.[3] Saye's proposal

March 30. The Lords support Bristol.

[1] The whole correspondence is printed in the sixth volume of the *Camden Miscellany.*

[2] *Lords' Journals*, iii. 537.

[3] *Elsing's Notes.*

CHAP. XII. 1626.

was at once adopted, and no trace of Charles's unlucky contrivance is to be found in the records of the House.[1]

April. Bristol comes to London.

Bristol had another surprise in store for Charles. As soon as he received the writ from Coventry, with the accompanying letter informing him that he was not to use it, he replied with inimitable irony that as the writ, being under the King's great seal, took precedence of a mere letter from the Lord Keeper, it was his duty to obey the Royal missive by coming to London.[2]

April 17. Attacks Buckingham.

When he reached London he proceeded to lay his correspondence with Coventry before the Peers. For two years, he added, he had been a prisoner simply because Buckingham was afraid of him. He therefore desired to be heard 'both in the point of his wrongs, and of the accusation of the said Duke.'

Charles and Buckingham seemed to be powerless in the hands of the terrible Earl. They had but one move left in a game in which their adversary had occupied all the positions of strength in advance. Though Charles had emphatically declared that Bristol had committed no actual offence, and had been guilty of nothing worse than an error of judgment, he was now compelled to accuse him of high treason, if he was not to allow him to take his seat triumphantly and to attack Buckingham from the very midst of the House of Lords.

April 17. Is accused by the King of high treason.

April 29. Was Bristol to take his seat?

That House had suddenly risen to a position unexampled for many a long year. Its decision was awaited anxiously on the gravest questions. It was called upon to do justice on Bristol, on Buckingham, and, by implication, on the King himself. By this time

[1] *Elsing's Notes.*

[2] Earl of Bristol's Defence, *Camden Miscellany*, vi. Pref. xxxv.

too it was becoming evident that the sympathy of the House was not with Buckingham. There was a sharp debate on the question whether Bristol should be allowed to take his seat till his accusation had been read. The supporters of the Government were compelled to avoid an adverse decision by an adjournment, and prevent further discussion by hurrying on the accusation.

May 1.

On May 1 therefore Bristol was brought to the bar to listen to the allegations of the Attorney-General. Heath had scarcely opened his mouth when the prisoner interrupted him, urging that the object of the charge was merely to put him in the position of a person accused of treason, so as to invalidate his testimony against Buckingham. He called Pembroke to witness how, when he first returned from Spain, Buckingham had proposed to silence him by sending him to the Tower. Buckingham, he said, was now aiming at the same object in another way.

The charges to proceed simultaneously.

If there had ever been any intention of getting rid of Bristol's charges upon technical grounds it could hardly be pressed after this. It was finally decided that though the Attorney-General was to have the precedence, the two cases were to be considered as proceeding simultaneously, so as to allow Bristol to say what he liked without hindrance.[1]

The charges against Bristol.

Hitherto the contest had been very one-sided. In Bristol's hands Charles and Buckingham had been as novices contending with a practised gladiator. But Charles and Buckingham had provoked the strife. And in truth they had but little to say. Many of Heath's charges related to mere advice given as a councillor, and those which went further would hardly bear the superstructure which was placed upon them. The attempt to change the Prince's religion of course

[1] *Elsing's Notes.*

CHAP. XII.

1626. May 1.

figured in the list, as did also an elaborate argument that if Bristol had not advised the continuance of the marriage negotiations in spite of his knowledge that the Spaniards were not in earnest, Charles would not have been obliged to go to Madrid to test the value of the ambassador's asseverations. Still more strange was the accusation that Bristol, in expressing a doubt of the accuracy of Buckingham's narrative in the Parliament of 1624, had thrown suspicion upon a statement which the present King had affirmed to be true, and had therefore given 'his Majesty the lie.'

Bristol's charges against Buckingham.

Bristol's charges against Buckingham were then read. His main point was that Buckingham had plotted with Gondomar to carry the Prince into Spain in order to effect a change in his religion, and that Porter, when he went to Madrid in the end of 1622, was cognisant of this plot. When Buckingham was in Spain, he had absented himself from the English Service in the ambassador's house, and had gone so far as to kneel in adoration of the Sacrament, in order 'to give the Spaniards a hope of the Prince's conversion.' Far worse conditions had been imposed by Spain after the Prince's visit than had been thought of before, and if England was now free from them it was because Buckingham's behaviour was so intolerable that the Spanish ministers refused to have anything further to do with him. Other charges of less importance followed, and then Bristol proceeded to accuse Conway of acting as a mere tool of the man whom he was accustomed to style his most gracious patron.

Case between Bristol and Buckingham.

Even if Buckingham, as was probably the case, had been the dupe rather than the confederate of Gondomar, and if he had merely played with the Spaniards in their hopeless design of converting the Prince, in order that he might gain his own ends the better, the weight of Bristol's charges tells far more heavily than

1626. May 1.

those brought against him. Nothing said of him by Heath, even if all were true, can compare in gravity with that which is known beyond doubt to have actually taken place, namely that Buckingham had formed a plan with a foreign ambassador for taking the Prince to Spain, and that he concealed the design for nearly a whole year from the reigning sovereign.

No wonder that Buckingham and Buckingham's master had been anxious to avoid the terrible exposure. They doubtless knew that Bristol had in his possession the letters which had been carried by Porter to Spain; and, though we have no means of knowing what those letters contained, there can be little doubt that there was much in them which neither Charles nor Buckingham would wish to make public.[1] As soon as it was known that the Lords meant to go into the evidence on both sides, Charles sent them a message that Bristol's charges were merely recriminatory, and that he was himself able to bear witness to their untruth. Carlisle, too, did his best to irritate the Peers against Bristol by calling the attention of the House to the Earl's disrespect to their lordships in sending a copy of his charges to the Lower House. But the Peers refused to notice an act the evident intention of which was to secure the publicity of which Bristol feared to be deprived.[2]

May 2. Interference by the King.

The investigation therefore was left to take its course. On the 6th, in the midst of a defence conducted with consummate ability, and in which Bristol pointed out that whatever he might have said in Spain about the Prince's conversion was caused by Charles's deliberate abstention from contradicting the rumours which were abroad of his intended change of religion,

May 6. Bristol's defence.

[1] In the *Sherborne MSS.* are the interrogations which Bristol, in his subsequent trial in the Star Chamber, put to Porter, asking him whether each of these letters, of which the first words were quoted, was genuine or not.

[2] *Elsing's Notes.*

CHAP. XII. 1626.

the accused Earl extracted from Pembroke an admission that he knew of Buckingham's proposal to send him to the Tower on his return from Spain. Such an admission would go far to strengthen the suspicions which were generally entertained, that Buckingham was now as indifferent to the wishes of Charles as he was then indifferent to the wishes of James.

May 8. Question of allowing counsel.

Every step of this great process was marked by some fresh interference of the King. He now sent to contest the right of the Lords to allow Bristol the use of counsel, as being contrary to the fundamental laws of the realm. This and the preceding message, in which Charles had tendered his personal evidence, were very coolly received by the Peers. The question of the propriety of admitting the King's evidence was referred to the Judges. The question of counsel was debated in the House. In the course of the discussion one of the Peers mentioned that in 1624 Charles himself had assented to an order allowing counsel to persons accused before the Lords.[1]

Buckingham impeached by the Commons.

The discussion was at its height when fresh actors appeared upon the scene. A deputation from the Commons, with Carleton, a most unwilling spokesman, at its head, had come to demand a conference that afternoon, with the well-understood intention of proceeding with the long-prepared impeachment of the Duke.

In the afternoon, therefore, eight managers on behalf of the Commons, together with sixteen assistants, appeared to read and to explain the charges. To the surprise of many, though it was not strictly in contravention of precedent,[2] Buckingham himself was

[1] *Elsing's Notes.* Charles afterwards argued that Middlesex, in whose case the order was made, was not accused of high treason, whereas Bristol was.

[2] The theory which seemed likely to prevail in Bristol's case, was that the accused person might keep his seat till his accusation had been read.

present, taking up a position directly opposite to the managers, and even, it is said, expressing his contempt for them by laughing in their faces.[1]

Prologue by Digges.

The prologue was entrusted to Digges. "The laws of England," he said, after a preamble in which he attributed to the Duke all the calamities which had befallen the nation, "have taught us that kings cannot command ill or unlawful things. And whatsoever ill event succeeds, the executioners of such designs must answer for them."

Importance of his declaration.

It has been said that no one rises so high as he who knows not whither he is going. Little did the Commons think of all that was implied in these words. By the mouth of Digges they had grasped at the sovereignty of England.

Meaning of the personal interference of Charles.

By his constant personal interference Charles had shown that he knew better than the House of Commons how much his own authority was at stake. They fancied that Buckingham had been the author of everything that had been done; had taken advantage of the King's youth and docility; had deceived him, misadvised him, even plundered him, without his knowing anything about the matter. Charles knew that it was not so; that he had himself been a party to all that had been done, either by agreeing to it beforehand or by approving of it afterwards. As this was so, he would never abandon Buckingham to his adversaries. Everything, he assured the Houses again and again, had been done by him or with his consent. It was not his fault if the Commons would not face the larger question of Royal responsibility before entering upon the smaller question of ministerial responsibility. He at least was perfectly clear about Royal responsibility. The King, he held, as Laud had taught him, was responsible

[1] Mead to Stuteville, May 13; *Ellis*, ser. 1, iii. 266.

CHAP. XII.

1626. May 8.

to God alone. When the King had said that a thing had been well done, there was an end of the matter. The weakness of the position of the Commons was that they would not look this assertion in the face. They maintained that by impeaching Buckingham they were strengthening the King's hands, whereas they were in reality weakening them, and were making the King indirectly responsible, whilst they would be the first to deny that he was responsible at all.

Difficulty of reaching the truth.

The Commons had need to take good care to say no more than they could prove. And yet how was this possible? The records of State affairs were not accessible to them. No Blue Books were issued in those days to enlighten them on the words spoken and the policy supported by a minister. Since Charles's accession the acts of Government had been veiled in deeper secrecy than ever before. If James had sometimes changed his mind, he had never failed to speak out the thought which ruled him for the time being. Charles said as little as possible, and no one was commissioned to say much on his behalf.

Besides the difficulty of knowing what had really been done, the Commons had made another difficulty for themselves by their resolution to spare the King. Again and again, in the course of their investigations, they reached the point in which Buckingham's acts ran into the acts of the King. In such a case silence was their only resource. They could not tell all they knew.

The first day of the impeachment.

The first charge was entrusted to Edward Herbert, one day to be the Attorney-General who took part in the impeachment of the five members. He spoke of the danger to the State from the many offices held in one hand; of the purchase of the Admiralty from Nottingham, and of the purchase of the Cinque Ports from Zouch. Selden had then to speak of the failure to

guard the Narrow Seas, and of the detention of the 'St. Peter of Havre de Grace.' To Glanville was entrusted the tale of the money exacted from the East India Company, and of the ships lent to serve against the Protestants of Rochelle. CHAP. XII. 1626. May 8.

Can it be wondered that Buckingham, conscious of his superior knowledge, should smile as he heard each story, told only as these men were able to tell it? Did he not know that in paying money to Nottingham and Zouch he had only conformed to the general custom? Could the failure to guard the seas be judged irrespectively of the wisdom of the employment to which the ships had been destined, or the exaction of money from the East India Company irrespective of the share which James had had in the transaction? To come to a true conclusion about the seizure of the 'St. Peter,' or the loan of the ships for Rochelle, it was necessary to know the whole truth about the relations between England and France; and though the whole truth would have told as much, if not more, against the Court than the Commons were aware, Buckingham may perhaps be excused for thinking more of the weakness of his opponents' case than of the weakness of his own. Still more had they missed the mark in charging him with the assumption of many offices in his own person. The Mastership of the Horse was a mere domestic office in the King's household. There was a direct advantage to the State in the accumulation of the Admiralty and the Wardenship of the Cinque Ports on one person. The real grievance was not that Buckingham nominally held three offices, but that he, being himself incompetent for the task, virtually controlled the action of the occupants of all other offices. Criticism on these charges.

On May 10 the remainder of the charges were heard. This time the Duke absented himself from the May 10. Second day of the impeachment.

CHAP. XII.

1626. May 10.

House. Sherland declared that Buckingham had compelled Lord Robartes to buy a peerage against his will. He had also sold the Treasurership to Manchester, and the Mastership of the Wards to Middlesex. Pym spoke effectively of the honours dealt out to Buckingham's poor kindred, entailing upon the Crown the necessity of supporting them. He had himself received from the Crown lands producing a rental of more than 3,000*l.*, and ready money to the amount of upwards of 160,000*l.*, to say nothing of valuable grants of other kinds. What these grants were worth no man could discover; for the accounts of the revenue were in such confusion that it was impossible to say how much had come into the Duke's hands by fictitious entries. One last charge remained, that of administering medicine to the late King on his death-bed. Wentworth's friend, Wandesford, did not venture to allude to the rumours of poison, which were at that time generally credited; but he justly characterised the act as one of 'transcendant presumption.'

That the facts thus disclosed deserved the most stringent investigation it is impossible to deny. But on the one hand the lavish grants of James to Buckingham and his kindred were a reproach rather to the giver than to the receiver; and, on the other hand, the looseness of the manner in which the accounts were kept, which was such as to baffle every serious investigator into the financial history of the time, is susceptible of another explanation than that which was given by Pym. Nothing can be asserted positively. But there is every reason to believe that the real accounts, if they were ever to be recovered, would tell more in Buckingham's favour than against him. Sums were paid into his hands, there can be little doubt, which were used by him not for his personal objects

CHAP. XII.

1626.

but for the service of the State, or for purposes to which the King wished them to be applied.[1]

May 10.

Reform, in short, was absolutely needed, a reform to which the expulsion of Buckingham from power would be the first step. But, with all his faults, the Buckingham of history is very different from the Buckingham of the impeachment. He could easily show that much which had been said by the Commons was exaggerated or untrue. It would go hard with him if he had to prove that he had any one qualification fitting him for the government of a great nation.

Need of reform.

It yet remained to sum up the different charges, and to embody the general feeling of the House in a few well-chosen words. To whom could the task better be entrusted than to Eliot, the man who above all

Eliot sums up.

[1] This seems to have been the case with the money received from Manchester and Cranfield (Middlesex). Robartes's money was paid to Buckingham, but it does not follow that it was not used for the fleet or some other public object. *See* Robartes's petition, March (?) 1626, and the depositions of Robartes and Strode, *S. P. Dom.*, xxiii. 118, lxvii. 40, i. Thus, too, in Pym's charge we have a statement that amongst moneys employed for his own use, the Duke had 60,000*l.*, paid to Burlamachi on Oct. 7, 1625 (*Lords' Journals*, iii. 614). The Declared Accounts, *Audit Office* (Agents for Special Services, roll 3, bundle 5), show us that 60,000*l.* was ordered to be paid to Burlamachi out of the Queen's portion money by a Privy Seal of August 5, and that of this, 52,313*l.* 15*s.* were paid before Michaelmas, 1625, and 6,300*l.* between Michaelmas and Easter, 1626. It also appears that Burlamachi was 'allowed for monies paid to the Duke of Buckingham, and such as be appointed to receive the same for secret services, and by him issued, most part upon his warrants and the rest upon his verbal significations, as by several acquittances of those who received the same may appear, the sum of 58,689*l.* 13*s.*' Can anything be looser than this? But does it follow that the money was not employed by Buckingham upon the public service? Probably this is the same money as that mentioned in Buckingham's defence (*Lords' Journals*, iii. 666), as 58,880*l.* Of the sum there named, 26,000*l.* is said to have been spent on the Navy, and the rest by his Majesty's directions. Again, Buckingham stated that on the 15th and 28th of January, he received of free gift 50,000*l.*; but it was for the fleet, and that the 'Duke's name was only used for that his Majesty was not willing to have that intention publicly discovered at that time.' This seems a very probable explanation.

CHAP. XII.

1626. May 10.

others had urged on the preparation of the charges with unremitting zeal, and who believed with all the energy of burning conviction in the unutterable baseness of the man against whom he was leading the attack. The oratorical and imaginative temperament pervaded the conclusions of Eliot's judgment. The half-measures and compromises of the world had no place in his mind. What was right in his eyes was entirely right; what was wrong was utterly and irretrievably wrong. So too in his personal attachments and hatreds. Those whom he believed to be serving their country truly he loved with an attachment proof against every trial. Those whom he believed to be doing disservice to their country he hated with an exceeding bitter hatred. Such a nature as Buckingham's, with its mixture of meanness and nobility, of consideration for self and forgetfulness of self, of empty vanity and real devotion, was a riddle beyond his power to read. In his lofty ideal, in his high disdain for that which he regarded as worthless, in his utter fearlessness and disregard for all selfish considerations, Eliot was the Milton, as Bacon had been almost the Shakspeare, of politics.

Eliot on responsibility.

The doctrine that the King's command relieved the subject from responsibility found no favour in Eliot's eyes. "My Lords," he said, in speaking of the loan of the ships to serve against Rochelle, "I will say that if his Majesty himself were pleased to have consented, or to have commanded, which I cannot believe, yet this could no way satisfy for the Duke, or make any extenuation of the charge; for it was the duty of his place to have opposed it by his prayers, and to have interceded with his Majesty to make known the dangers, the ill consequences, that might follow. And if this prevailed not, should he have ended here? No; he should then have addressed himself to your Lordships, your Lordships sitting in council, and there have made it known, there

have desired your aids. Nor, if in this he sped not, should he have rested without entering before you a protestation for himself, and that he was not consenting. This was the duty of his place; this has been the practice of his elders; and this, being here neglected, leaves him without excuse."

It was characteristic of Eliot to approach the subject from the moral rather than the political side. It was nothing to him that he was lightly dashing into ruin the whole scaffolding upon which the Tudor monarchy had rested, the responsibility of ministers to the sovereign alone. He called upon every man to profess openly, in the eye of day, his personal conviction of right as the basis of action. With such a faith as this, whatever mistakes Eliot might commit in the immediate present, he had raised a standard for the future which could never again be permanently dragged into the dust. Not in fidelity to constitutional arrangements, not in obedience to the orders of a King or in obedience to the votes of a Parliament, lay the secret of political capacity. The ideal statesman was to be the man who had the open eye to discern his country's wants, the tongue to speak freely the counsel which his mind had conceived, and the heart and the resolution to suffer, if not to die, in the defence of his belief.

Attack upon Buckingham's power and wealth.

To such a man the faults of Buckingham, his heedlessness, his wanton profusion, must have seemed infinitely mean, altogether meaner than they really were. Buckingham's power, he said, was in itself a wonder; it needed a party to support it. To that end 'he raised and preferred to honours and commands those of his own alliance, the creatures of his kindred and affection, how mean soever.' Having thus got all power into his hands, he 'set upon the revenues of the Crown, interrupting, exhausting, and consuming

CHAP. XII.

1626. May 12.

that fountain of supply.' "What vast treasures," cried Eliot, "he has gotten; what infinite sums of money, and what a mass of lands! If your Lordships please to calculate, you will find it all amounting to little less than the whole of the subsidies which the King hath had within that time. A lamentable example of the subjects' bounties so to be employed! But is this all? No; your Lordships may not think it. These are but collections of a short view, used only as an epitome for the rest. There needs no search for it; it is too visible. His profuse expenses, his superfluous feasts, his magnificent buildings, his riots, his excesses, what are they but the visible evidences of an express exhausting of the State, a chronicle of the immensity of his waste of the revenues of the Crown! No wonder, then, our King is now in want, this man abounding so. And as long as he abounds the King must still be wanting."

The first administration of medicine to James.

Worse was still to come. Eliot had to make reference to the administration of medicine to the late King, perhaps too in some covert way to the graver suspicions which attached to that act even in the eyes of men who, like Bristol, had little sympathy for mere popular rumour. "Not satisfied," Eliot continued, "with the wrongs of honour, with the prejudice of religion, with the abuse of State, with the misappropriation of revenues, his attempts go higher, even to the person of his sovereign. You have before you his making practice on that, in such a manner and with such effect as I fear to speak it, nay, I doubt and hesitate to think it. In which respect I shall leave it, as Cicero did the like, *ne gravioribus utar verbis quam natura fert, aut levioribus quam causa postulat.* The examination with your Lordships will show you what it is. I need not name it.

"In all these now your Lordships have the idea of the man; what in himself he is, and what in his affections. You have seen his power, and some, I fear, have felt it. What hopes or expectations then he gives I leave it to your Lordships. I will now only see, by comparison with others, where I may find him paralleled or likened; and, so considering what may now become him, from thence render your Lordships to a short conclusion.

To whom is he to be compared?

"Of all the precedents I can find, none so near resembles him as doth Sejanus, and him Tacitus describes thus: that he was *audax; sui obtegens, in alios criminator; juxta adulatio et superbia.* If your Lordships please to measure him by this, pray see in what they vary. He is bold. We have had experience lately; and such a boldness I dare be bold to say as is seldom heard of. He is secret in his purposes, and more; that we have showed already. Is he a slanderer? Is he an accuser? I wish this Parliament had not felt it, nor that which was before. And for his pride and flattery, what man can judge the greater? Thus far, I think, the parallel holds. But now, I beseech your Lordships, look a little further. Of Sejanus it is likewise noted amongst his policies, amongst his arts, that to support himself he did *clientes suos honoribus aut provinciis ornare.* He preferred his clients to second, to assist him. And does this man do the like? Is it not, and in the same terms, a special cause in our complaint now? Does not this kingdom, does not Scotland, does not Ireland speak it? I will observe one thing more, and end. It is a note upon the pride of Sejanus, upon his high ambition, which your Lordships will find set down by Tacitus. His solecisms, his neglect of counsels, his veneries, his

Parallel with Sejanus.

CHAP. XII.

1626. May 10.

venefices; these I will not mention here:[1] only that particular of his pride, which thus I find. In his public passages and relations he would so mix his business with the prince's, seeming to confound their actions, that he was often styled *laborum imperatoris socius.* And does not this man do the like? Is it not in his whole practice? How often, how lately have we heard it? Did he not, in this same place, in this very Parliament, under colour of an explanation for the King, before the Committees of both Houses, do the same? Have not your Lordships heard him also ever mixing and confusing the King and the State, not leaving a distinction between them? It is too, too manifest.

"My Lords, I have done. You see the man. What have been his actions; whom he is like, you know. I leave him to your judgments."

Comparison with the Bishop of Ely.

Eliot had one other parallel to draw. "And now, my Lords," he said, "I will conclude with a particular censure given on the Bishop of Ely in the time of Richard I. That Prelate had the King's treasures at his command and had luxuriously abused them. His obscure kindred were married to Earls, Barons, and others of great rank and place. No man's business could be done without his help. He would not suffer the King's council to advise in the highest affairs of State. He gave *ignotis personis et obscuris* the custody of castles and great trusts. He ascended to such a height of insolence and pride that he ceased to be fit for characters of mercy. And therefore, says the record of which I now hold the original, *per totam insulam publice proclametur, Pereat qui perdere cuncta festinat; opprimatur ne omnes opprimat.*"[2]

[1] "Such expressions," Mr. Forster observes, "could not of course have been directly applied to Buckingham. They are insinuated only through Sejanus."

[2] Forster, *Sir J. Eliot*, i. 324-330.

CHAP. XII.

1626.

Such was the terrible invective, glowing with the fire of innermost conviction, and strong with the roused indignation of an angry people collected into one burning focus, which poured that day from the lips of the great orator. Much, if not all, that he said went true to the mark. The vanity and self-confidence of the man, the assumption of almost regal dignity, the immense wealth heaped up when the royal exchequer was drained of its last resources, were depicted with unerring accuracy. And yet the portrait, as a whole, was untrue to nature. It was false that Buckingham was a Sejanus. It was false that he had been guilty of sordid bribery. It was false that he had used the powers of government in his own hands, simply for his own private ends, and not for that which for the time he believed to be the best interest of the State.

May 10. How far was this portrait true?

And if this is now plain to any one who will carefully and dispassionately study the records of Buckingham's misdeeds, what must have been the effect of the speech upon Charles, who believed as implicitly in the wisdom as in the innocence of his minister, and who felt that he was himself attacked through Buckingham. "If the Duke is Sejanus," he is reported to have said, "I must be Tiberius."[1] The next day, in a speech prepared for him by Laud, he tried to enlist the sympathies of the Peers in his favour. In the attack upon Buckingham, he told them, their honour had been wounded. He had himself taken order for the punishment of the offenders. If he had not done so before, it was because Buckingham had begged that the impeachment might proceed, in order that his innocency might be shown. Of his innocency there could be no doubt

Anger of Charles.

May 11. The King's speech to the Lords.

[1] D'Ewes gives the words (*Harl. MSS.*, 383, fol. 32) apparently as part of the King's speech which follows in the text. But, though this seems to be incorrect, Charles may very likely have used the words in private.

CHAP. XII. 1626. May 11.

whatever, 'for, as touching the occasions against him,' he could himself 'be a witness to clear him of every one of them.'

His answer about Arundel.

It was only in words that Charles attempted to conciliate the Peers. Two days before, they had petitioned for 'a gracious present answer' to their request for the liberation of Arundel. At these words he had taken fire. "I did little look," he replied, "for such a message from the House, and did never know such a message sent from the one House to the other. Therefore, when I receive a message fit to come from you to your sovereign, you shall receive an answer."

The Commons demand Buckingham's imprisonment.

Before a reply could be given by the House, Sir Nathaniel Rich appeared on behalf of the Commons to ask that Buckingham might be put under restraint during the impeachment, a request with which the Lords refused for the present to comply, on the ground that the charges against him had not yet been formally reported. But this concession to the Court, if concession it was, was more than counterbalanced by the reply returned to the King's message. As soon as it was understood that Charles's special objection was to the demand of a 'present answer,' Saye and Sele proposed that it should be explained to him that the word 'present' only meant 'speedy.' Manchester, catching at the suggestion, moved that the petition might be amended so as to ask for 'a gracious, speedy answer.' "Leave out the word 'speedy' also," cried Buckingham. Yes, was the reply, but leave out the word 'gracious' too. The House accordingly voted that they would merely ask for 'your Majesty's answer.'[1]

The Lords' reply about Arundel.

It was but a little thing in itself, but it indicated plainly the temper into which the Lords had been brought.

[1] *Elsing's Notes.*

1626.

The claim of the King to imprison members during the session, maintained as yet in the face of the Lords, was to receive a more daring application in the face of the Commons. When Rich returned after delivering his message, he found the Lower House in great commotion. It was discovered that neither Eliot nor Digges were in their places, and on enquiry it appeared that they had been sent for to the door, and had been hurried off to the Tower. Shouts of Rise! Rise! sounded on all sides. In vain Pym, not yet aware of the true state of the case,[1] did his best to quiet the tumult. The House broke up in discontent. In the afternoon an informal assembly gathered in Westminster Hall, and serious words were interchanged on this unexpected attack upon the liberties of Parliament.

May 11. Imprisonment of Eliot and Digges.

The next morning, when the Speaker rose, as usual, at the commencement of business, he was at once interrupted. "Sit down," was the general cry. "No business till we are righted in our liberties." Carleton attempted to defend his master's conduct. He had much to say of the tartness of Eliot's language. But the main offence both of Digges and Eliot was that they had pressed "the death of his late Majesty, whereas the House had only charged the Duke with presumption." Eliot had hinted that more had taken place than he dared to speak of. Digges had even suggested that the present King had had a hand in his father's murder. In speaking of the plaster given to James, he had added 'that he would therein spare the honour of the King.' It was for the House to consider whether they had authorised such a charge as this.

May 12. Carleton defends the King.

[1] Which shouts 'Mr. Pym, not well understanding, stood up,' &c. Mead to Stuteville, May 13; *Harl. MSS.*, 390, fol. 57. This seems more likely than that Pym should have objected, if he had known what happened.

CHAP. XII.

1626. May 12.

The two members, in short, were punished as having gone beyond the directions of the House.

Carleton had something yet more startling to add. "I beseech you, Gentlemen," he said, "move not his Majesty with trenching upon his prerogatives, lest you bring him out of love with Parliaments. In his message he hath told you that if there were not correspondency between him and you, he should be enforced to use new counsels. Now I pray you to consider what these new counsels are, and may be. I fear to declare those that I conceive. In all Christian kingdoms you know that Parliaments were in use anciently, until the monarchs began to know their own strength; and, seeing the turbulent spirit of their Parliaments, at length they, by little and little, began to stand upon their prerogatives, and at last overthrew the Parliaments throughout Christendom, except here only with us." Then he went on to speak of the scenes which he had lately witnessed in France, of the peasants looking like ghosts rather than like men, of their scanty covering and wooden shoes, as well as of the heavy taxation imposed upon them. "This," he ended by saying, "is a misery beyond expression, and that which yet we are free from."[1]

Answer of the Commons.

With great difficulty the Commons were restrained from calling Carleton to the bar. The danger with which they had been threatened was, in their opinion, best met by a firm pursuance of their course. On the one hand they ordered a protest to be signed by every member disclaiming all part in the imputation upon the King in relation to his father's death, which had been attributed to Digges. On the other hand they

[1] Though no country is named, I have no doubt that his last visit to France was intended. Such scenes were not to be witnessed amongst Dutch or Venetian peasants. Besides, the subsequent words about men taxed to *the King*, show what Carleton was thinking of.

prepared a vindication of their own liberties to be laid before Charles.[1]

1626.

Carleton's speech had neither made nor deserved to make the slightest impression. But it was not, as it is usually represented, either ridiculous or illogical. If it had been possible to grant his premisses, and to allow that the Commons were factiously taking advantage of the danger of their country to advance their own position in the State, Carleton's warnings might well have been listened to with respect in their substance, if not in their form. There is no law of nature to save Parliaments any more than Kings, when they forget the interests of the nation which they are appointed to protect. If Carleton and his master were in the wrong, it was because whatever mistakes the Commons might have committed, the interests of the nation were safer in their hands than in those of the King.

May 12. Remarks on Carleton's speech.

If Charles was wrong in his general view of the case, it soon appeared that he was no less wrong in his knowledge of the particular circumstances. As soon as the report of the proceeding at the Conference was read in the Upper House it was seen that, if that report could be trusted, Digges had said something different from that which was alleged against him. But Buckingham was not satisfied. With a warmth which may easily be excused in a man against whom a charge of having poisoned his benefactor had been brought, he protested his own innocence, and then expressed an opinion that the report was not altogether correct. Manchester, by whom that portion of the report had been drawn up, admitted that, as his notes had been rapidly taken, he had afterwards consulted Digges on their accuracy, and that Digges had 'mollified' the wording. According to the notes, Digges had

May 15. The Lords question Digges's words.

[1] *Rushworth*, i. 360.

CHAP. XII.

1626. May 15.

said that he wished 'not to reflect upon the person either of the dead or of the present King.' That is to say, cried Buckingham, 'on the dead King touching point of government; upon this King touching the physic.' A protest was at once raised by North and Devonshire. "This," added Saye, "may trench on all our loyalties." Each Peer, it was then suggested, should be called upon to declare whether he had heard anything 'that might be interpreted treason.' In spite of an interruption from Buckingham, that he wanted Digges's words, not his meaning, Saye rose and protested that Digges had neither spoken the words alleged, nor did he conceive that he had the intention ascribed to him. The great majority of the Peers followed Saye's example. A few only on various grounds refused to make the declaration. In the end, thirty-six Peers, Buckingham's brother-in-law Denbigh amongst them, signed a protest that Digges had said nothing contrary to the King's honour.

Question of counsel for Bristol.

May 13.

Before they parted, the Peers took another step in opposition. They replied to the King's message urging that to allow Bristol the use of counsel was contrary to the fundamental laws of the realm, by respectfully assuring him that he was altogether mistaken. On the other question of the King's right to tender evidence against a subject, which had been referred to the judges, Charles himself had already seen fit to waive his pretensions for the present. He had directed the judges to give no resolution on that point, 'not knowing how dangerous it may be for the future.[1]

May 16. Digges released.

After what had passed in the Lords, it was impossible to keep Digges any longer in the Tower, and the next morning he reappeared in his usual place. But Charles could not be so easily induced to relax his hold

[1] *Elsing's Notes*; *Lords' Journals*, iii. 627. See p. 46.

1626. May 16.

upon Eliot, the guiding spirit of the attack upon his Government. If the King pleaded the precedents of Elizabeth's reign, he would certainly find in the Commons the same bitter opposition which his treatment of Arundel had raised in the Lords. It seemed to him better to evade the difficulty; and, dropping the original complaint, he ordered Weston to acquaint the Commons that Eliot was charged 'with things extrajudicial to the House.' Weston, who was directed by the Commons to enquire what was the meaning of the word 'extrajudicial,' informed them that Eliot's crimes had been committed out of the House.

New ground taken in Eliot's case.

May 17. Weston's explanations.

It was not likely that the Commons would be beguiled by so transparent a subterfuge. The feeling of the House was unmistakeable. In vain Carleton urged that they should clear Eliot of all that he had done as a member, and ask the King to release him out of favour to themselves. It was the very thing which they absolutely refused to do. They were well aware that a member might have done things which no Parliamentary privilege could cover. He might have committed high treason. He might have committed highway robbery. But they wished to have an opportunity of judging for themselves whether anything so unlikely had really happened. When therefore Carleton, pushed to the wall, entreated them to give his Majesty time to prove his accusation, they at once complied with his request and suspended their sittings till the 19th. But it is hardly likely that any one present took Charles's explanation seriously. "The King," wrote one of the members to a friend, in speaking of Eliot's imprisonment, "hath sent him to the Tower for some words spoken in Parliament, but we are all resolved to have him out again, or will proceed to no business." [1]

The Commons suspend their sittings.

[1] Forster, *Sir J. Eliot*, i. 561.

CHAP. XII.

1626. May 18. Fresh charges against Eliot.

Charles, in fact, had still to discover the charges upon which he had elected to take his stand. That Eliot had been instigated by Blainville to prefer the complaints relating to the 'St. Peter' was too probable a solution of all that had passed not to present itself to him. But it was a long step from mere suspicion to actual evidence. In vain Eliot's study was searched for proof. In vain Eliot was himself subjected to an examination. Not one scrap of evidence was producible to show that the slightest intercourse between Eliot and the ambassador had ever taken place. Charles had forgotten that the very imperfect manner in which that part of the charge against Buckingham had been produced was in itself the strongest evidence that the French ambassador had not been consulted. With Blainville's assistance Eliot would have drawn up a far more telling case than he had succeeded in doing.

May 19. Eliot released

There was therefore nothing for it but to set Eliot at liberty. When the Commons reassembled they were informed by Carleton that his imprisonment was at an end. But the House was not to be so easily contented.

May 20. and cleared by the House.

The next morning they compelled Carleton to go over one by one the objections which he had originally taken to the epilogue delivered before the Lords. With a mixture of sarcasm and pleasantry, Eliot answered them in detail One reply was peculiarly felicitous. He had been accused of speaking slightingly of the Duke as 'the man.' The word, he answered, had been commonly applied to Alexander and Cæsar, 'which were not less than he.' It was therefore no dishonour to the Duke to be so called, 'whom yet he thinketh not to be a god.' In the end, both Eliot and Digges were unanimously cleared of the imputations brought against them.

Charles's failure.

The attempt and its failure were alike characteristic

of Charles. Prone to act upon impulse, he had been thrown off his balance by the suggestion, which the words reported to him seemed to convey, that he had himself been implicated in his father's murder. Taking it for granted that the facts were as he supposed them to be, taking it for granted too that he had the right, by the precedents of Elizabeth's reign, to punish the offenders, he had been startled when the House of Lords denied his facts, and the House of Commons denied his right. The whole opposition which started up before him, the protesting Lords and the sternly resolute Commons, were thoroughly unprovided for in his plan of action. Like an inexperienced general who has forgotten to allow for the independent action of the enemy, he had nothing for it but to take refuge in the first defence which offered itself as a means of prolonging the contest. But the new device shivered in his hands, and he stood unarmed and discredited in the face of the nation.

1626. May 20.

In the House of Lords, too, the tide was running strongly against his hopes. Already he had been driven to withdraw his pretension to deprive Bristol of the help of counsel; and as soon as the accused Earl had had time to bring in his answer to the charges against him, the Lords warmly took up their claim to see Arundel restored to their House. Nor was it only the exclusion of their members that they dreaded. Grandison had just been created Baron Tregoze in the English Peerage, and Carleton had been snatched away from the assaults of the champion of the Commons to sit on the benches of the Upper House as Lord Carleton of Imberville. By the independent Lords these promotions were regarded as a preliminary to an attempt to pack the House by a creation on a far larger scale, and some were even heard to suggest the

May 17. Bristol's case in the Lords.

May 19.

CHAP. XII. 1626.

extreme measure of depriving the new Peers of their votes till the end of the session.[1]

In vain, therefore, Charles alleged, as he had alleged against Eliot, that he had fresh charges to bring against Arundel. The Peers would listen to no excuses. On June 5 the Earl recovered his entire liberty,[2] and on the 8th he was in his place amongst the Peers.

June 5. Liberation of Arundel.

May 24. Tonnage and poundage declared illegal unless granted by Parliament.

In the meanwhile the Commons had been busy reinforcing their attack upon Buckingham by a simultaneous declaration of the illegality of the collection of tonnage and poundage, unless voted by themselves, and of their own readiness to settle an ample revenue upon the King if he would conform to their wishes.

Before long, however, an incident occurred which must have convinced the most reluctant that it was in vain to hope that either fear or persuasion would induce the King to abandon Buckingham. On May 28 Suffolk died, leaving the Chancellorship of the University of Cambridge vacant. "I would Buckingham were Chancellor," said Charles, when he heard the news. The idea took firm possession of his mind, and the next morning a chaplain of the Bishop of London[3] carried to Cambridge an intimation of the royal pleasure. The Bishop himself soon followed; and the whole party which had seen with displeasure the continued attacks of the Commons upon Montague and his book rallied round the Duke. The Masters of Trinity, of Peterhouse, and of Clare Hall used all their influence in his favour; and the influence of the Head of a House, who thought more of the object to be gained than of his own character for impartiality, was no slight weight in the

May 28. The Cambridge Chancellorship.

[1] Joachimi to the States General, $\frac{\text{May } 31}{\text{June } 10}$; *Add. MSS.*, 17,677 L., fol. 225.

[2] Conway to Arundel, June 5; *S. P. Dom., Addenda.*

[3] i.e. Bishop Montaigne; not Laud, as Mr. Forster states by an oversight.

CHAP. XII.

scale. Yet, discouraging as the prospects of the Calvinists were, they chose at the last moment a candidate in the person of the Earl of Berkshire, the second son of the late Chancellor; and so strong was the party numerically, that though there was no time to obtain assurance of their candidate's consent, they secured no less than 103 votes in his favour. Buckingham, it was true, obtained 108. But it was known that many had voted for him sorely against their wishes, and it was whispered amongst Berkshire's supporters that, even as it was, an impartial scrutiny would have converted their opponents' victory into a defeat.[1]

1626. May 28.

June 1. Election of Buckingham.

Deep offence was taken by the Commons at this new honour conferred upon a man whom they had charged with holding too many offices already. Venturing upon unsafe ground, they resolved that a deputation from the University should be sent for to give an account of the election, a resolution which was met by positive orders from the King to proceed no further in that direction, as the University was entitled to elect any one it pleased.[2] The reply of the House was the conversion of the remonstrance upon freedom from arrest into a general statement of grievances.

June 5. Displeasure of the Commons.

June 6.

June 8.

On the day when this new appeal to the King was to be drawn up, Buckingham laid his defence before the Lords. Prepared, it is said, by Nicholas Hyde, in all probability under Heath's supervision, and submitted to the friendly criticism of Laud,[3] the Duke's answer had been prepared with no common ability. Rebutting, as with their superior knowledge its authors

Buckingham's defence.

[1] Mead to Stuteville, June 3; *Ellis*, ser. 1, iii. 228. Certain Considerations, &c.; *Harl. MSS.*, 161, fol. 134.

[2] —— to Mead, June 9; *Harl. MSS.*, 390, fol. 73.

[3] Of Laud's part there is no doubt. *See S. P. Dom.*, xxvii. 25. Hyde's part we learn from *Whitelocke's Memorials*, 8. For Heath, see the King's warrant to assist Buckingham; *S. P. Dom., Addenda.*

CHAP. XII.

1626. June 8.

were well able to do, many of the accusations, in the form at least in which they had been brought, they were able to assert that in other respects the Duke had either acted by the King's orders, or, if he had gone wrong, had done so either from inadvertence or from complying with customs already established when he came to Court. "Who accused me?" said Buckingham—"common fame. Who gave me up to your Lordships?—the House of Commons. The one is too subtle a body, if a body; the other too great for me to contest with. Yet I am confident neither the one nor the other shall be found my enemy when my cause comes to be tried."

Buckingham's confidence.

The confidence thus expressed was doubtless a genuine expression of feeling. Buckingham could not hope to have the issue tried on more favourable ground. He knew that he had witnesses to prove that on many important points the Commons had been in error,[1] and, if he could close his eyes to the political antagonism which he had aroused, an acquittal would seem to him to be the probable termination of the affair.

The news, however, that the Commons had embarked upon a general remonstrance cannot have been without effect even upon Buckingham. To Charles it must have been absolutely decisive. Believing as he did that his minister was the victim of a factious combination, he had submitted to wait till the worthlessness of the evidence against him had been proved. But if the Commons were about to demand that, whether their charges were proved or not, he should dismiss his minister, he would only be strengthened in his opinion that the honour of his crown was at stake. He therefore peremptorily demanded that, happen what might,

June 9. The King demands supply.

[1] Nicholas, for instance, seems from the notes prepared by him (*S. P. Dom.*, xxvii. 105–111) to have been ready to tell the truth and to call upon Pennington to tell the truth about the ships lent to the French.

the Subsidy Bill should be passed before the end of the following week. If it were not, he should be forced 'to use other resolutions.'[1]

June 10. Further steps of the Commons.

Before the Royal message was taken into consideration, the Commons took a further step, which indicated plainly enough the spirit by which they were animated. They ordered the Committee to which the framing of the remonstrance had been entrusted to send for the Parliament roll containing the declaration made by Buckingham after his return from Spain, and to require the young Lord Digby, by whom his father's charges against the Duke had formerly been communicated to the House, to prove, if he was able, that Parliament had been abused on that occasion.[2] The day before the Lords had given a similar indication of their feeling by ordering the Attorney-General to take charge of Bristol's case, so as to give to it those official advantages which had been accorded to the King's accusations.

June 9. Bristol's case taken up by the Lords.

The Commons probably intended to incorporate Bristol's charges in their remonstrance. But time pressed, and it was doubtful whether, if they embarked upon such a work, they would be allowed to finish it. The question which they met to discuss on the morning of the 12th was whether the remonstrance or the supply should be presented first. After a long and stormy debate, a large majority voted that the remonstrance should have the precedence.[3]

June 12. The remonstrance to precede supply.

From the ground thus taken up by the Commons it would in the long run be found impossible to drive them. After running over the charges which they

Substance of the remonstrance.

[1] *Lords' Journals*, iii. 670.

[2] *Commons' Journals*, i. 870. Digby may be a slip for Bristol; but the young lord, having presented his father's complaint, had a *locus standi* before the House.

[3] Meddus to Mead, June 16; *Court and Times*, i. 110.

CHAP. XII. 1626. June 12.

had brought against the Duke, they expressed their reprobation of those new counsels which had been held before their eyes by Carleton, and denied that tonnage and poundage could be lawfully raised without their consent. Then, turning upon Buckingham, they declared that the articles which they had sent up to the Lords were not the measure of their objections to his 'excessive and abusive power.' These they had been 'enforced to insist upon, as matters' lying under their 'notice and proof.' But beyond them they believed him to be an enemy to both Church and State. It was therefore grievous to them to find that he had 'so great power and interest in' the King's 'princely affections,' so as, under his Majesty, 'wholly in a manner to engross to himself the administration of' the realm, 'which by that means is drawn into a condition most miserable and hazardous.' They therefore begged that he would remove the Duke from his presence, and would not 'balance this one man with all these things and with the affairs of the Christian world, which all do suffer, so far as they have relation to this kingdom, chiefly by his means.'

"For we protest," they went on to say, "before your Majesty and the whole world, that until this great person be removed from intermeddling with the great affairs of State, we are out of hope of any good success; and do fear that any money we shall or can give will, through his misemployment, be turned rather to the hurt and prejudice of this your kingdom than otherwise, as by lamentable experience we have found in those large supplies formerly and lately given."

What this implied.

The Commons, in short, had again taken up the position which they had occupied at the close of the Oxford meeting. They would give no money where they could place no confidence. And no impartial reader of the long story of the mishaps of the Govern-

ment can deny that they were thoroughly in the right in refusing their confidence to the man who was mainly responsible for these misfortunes.

In one respect indeed the Commons were slow to perceive the whole consequence of their change of position. If they had been able to substantiate the criminal charges which they had brought against Buckingham, if they could have proved him to be false, corrupt, and venal, Charles could have parted with him without loss of honour. But to ask the King to abandon his minister on the ground that the Commons could not trust him, though the acts at which they took umbrage had been done, always nominally and often really, by the authority of Charles, was to ask him to surrender himself as well as Buckingham. Neither Elizabeth nor even his father had allowed any one to dictate to them the counsellors to whom they should listen. If the advisers of the Crown and the officers of State were to be accepted or dismissed at the will of the House of Commons, the supremacy of the House of Commons would soon be undisputed. Would such a change carry with it merely political consequences? Could a popular body form a government? Would not anarchy and confusion ensue to the nation, personal danger to the King? To yield now might be to launch the bark of Royalty without chart or compass on that sea of violence and intrigue which was to be descried by the anxious King in those annals of the Middle Ages to which the Commons so cheerfully appealed. To him the precedents of Eliot spoke not of justice executed, but of riot and disorder. "Let us sit upon the ground," they seemed to say,

> "And tell sad stories of the death of kings:
> How some have been deposed, some slain in war,
> Some haunted by the ghosts they have deposed,
> Some poisoned by their wives, some sleeping, killed,—
> All murdered."

CHAP. XII.

1626. May 18.

To acknowledge Buckingham's responsibility was indirectly to acknowledge his own. And where was that to end? Perhaps it was too late for him now to learn a better way, and to discern that alike behind the despotism of the Tudors and the violence of the Middle Ages a deeper principle had been at work, a principle which called upon rulers to guide, and not to force, the national will. Precedents might be quoted for almost any iniquity on either side. But the great precedent of all, from which all worthy precedents received their value, the tradition of a healthy national life handed down by father to son from the remotest days, was guarded in the hearts of the English nation by defences against which Charles would dash himself in vain.

June 14. A dissolution resolved on.

The King's choice was soon made. As he had said earlier in the session, he would give liberty of counsel, not of control. In vain Heath, with lawyer-like appreciation of the weakness of the articles of impeachment, pleaded hard for delay. In vain the Peers begged earnestly for the prolongation of the situation by which they were constituted as supreme arbitrators between the nation and the Crown. To their urgent entreaty that Charles would grant them but two days more, he replied impatiently, "Not a minute." On June 15 the Parliament of 1626 ceased to exist.[1]

June 15. The dissolution.

Future of the constitution.

"Let compounds be dissolved."[2] The words with which Wotton had closed the epitaph of the great philosopher and statesman who had passed away from his earthly work almost unnoticed amidst the contentions of the session which had now been brought to a close, might fitly be inscribed over the tomb of the

[1] Heath to Buckingham, June 14 (?); *S. P. Dom., Addenda. Lords' Journals*, iii. 682. —— to Mead, June 15; *Harl. MSS.*, 390, fol. 776.

[2] "Composita dissolvantur."

constitutional theories which Bacon had striven hard to realise. The King and the House of Commons no longer formed constituent parts of one body. On either side new counsels would prevail. The King would demand to be sole judge of the fitness of his own actions, and to compel the nation to follow him whithersoever he chose to lead. Parliament would grasp at the right of control as well as the right of counsel, and would discover that the responsibility of ministers could only be secured by enforcing the responsibility of Kings. At last, after a terrible struggle, teeming alike with heroic examples and deeds of violence, a new harmony would be evolved out of the ruins of the old.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE RUPTURE WITH FRANCE AND THE FORCED LOAN.

CHAP. XIII.

1626.

June 15. New counsels.

In trying the effect of those 'new counsels' with which the Commons had been so often threatened, Charles, it may be safely said, had no intention of deliberately treading under foot the laws of England. Holding as he did that a few factious men had preferred their own ambitious schemes to the welfare of the country, he believed himself to be justified in putting forth for a time the powers of that undefined prerogative which was given him for use in special emergencies when the safety of the nation was at stake.

June 16. Proclamation for the peace of the Church.

His first thought was to issue a proclamation for the establishing of the peace and quiet of the Church of England. On April 17 Pym had reported to the Lower House a long string of charges against Montague,[1] and, if time could have been found before the dissolution, his impeachment would doubtless have followed. In his proclamation Charles spoke of 'questions and opinions' lately broached in matters of doctrine, 'which at first only being meant against the Papists, but afterwards by the sharp and indiscreet handling and maintaining by some of either parts, have given much offence to the sober and well grounded readers and hearers of these late written books on both sides, which may justly be feared will raise some hopes in the professed enemies of our religion, the

[1] *Debates in 1625, Camden Soc.*, App. 179.

Romish Catholics, that by degrees the professors of our religion may be drawn into schism, and after to plain Popery.'

June 16.

Charles's remedy for the evil was to reduce both parties to silence. No new opinions were to be introduced by tongue or pen; no innovation to be allowed in Church or State. As both Pym and Montague claimed to be setters forth of the original doctrine of the Church of England, it was not unlikely they would both be able to interpret the proclamation in their favour. But it was probable that in practice it would be found rather on the side of Montague than on that of Pym.[1]

June 17. Calls in the remonstrance.

The next day a fresh proclamation was issued ordering the destruction of all copies of the remonstrance of the Commons.[2] But Charles took care not to inflict the slightest punishment upon the offending members of either House with the exception of Bristol and Arundel, and he might fairly argue that if the two obnoxious Peers had committed faults at all, they were faults which had nothing to do with their position as members of the House of Lords. Arundel was therefore relegated to confinement in his own house,[3] and Bristol was sent to the Tower to prepare for a Star Chamber prosecution. If wrong was done, the wrong did not this time take the shape of a breach of privilege.

Commitment of Bristol and Arundel.

Buckingham's case to be tried in the Star Chamber.

It was Charles's intention that Buckingham was still to be allowed, in spite of the dissolution, to bring his defence to a triumphant issue. Heath was accordingly directed to request the managers of the impeachment to carry on their case before the Star Chamber.[4]

[1] *Rymer*, xviii. 719.

[2] *Ibid.*, 721.

[3] *Salvetti's Newsletter*, June $\frac{16}{26}$.

[4] Heath to Eliot and others, June 17; Forster, *Sir J. Eliot*, i. 350.

CHAP. XIII.

1626.

But the plan broke down upon the steady refusal of the managers to have anything to do with the matter. "We," Eliot answered in their name, "entreat you to take knowledge that whatsoever was done by us in that business was done by the command of the House of Commons, and by their directions some proofs were delivered to the Lords with the charges, but what other proofs the House would have used, according to the liberty reserved to themselves, either for the maintenance of their charge or upon their reply, we neither know nor can undertake to inform you." The next day Eliot was pressed to give a better answer. "My first knowledge and intelligence," he replied, "happening in Parliament, after discharge of mine own particular duties to the House, I remitted to that again wholly the memory and consideration thereof." It was no private charge which he had brought. The accusation had sprung from the House of Commons, and if the King wished it to be carried further, he must provide for the resuscitation of Parliament. Charles, however, thought that he could carry on the accusation without having recourse to so formidable an instrument. The charges were formally repeated and formally answered, and the Star Chamber gave a sentence in favour of the Duke which inspired no confidence in any one who was not already convinced that it was right.[1]

June 19. The Parliamentary managers refuse to take part in the trial.

June 20. Eliot's defence of their refusal.

Such sentences were easily obtainable. It was less easy to provide money for the war which Charles was resolved to carry on. A loan of 100,000*l.*, on the security of the Crown jewels, was demanded from the City. But the City firmly refused to lend, and it was only upon strong pressure from the King himself that

The City refuses a loan.

[1] Forster, *Sir J. Eliot*, i. 350.

the Aldermen agreed personally to provide him with the fifth part of the sum named.[1]

More general measures were required if the exchequer was to be filled. For some time rumours of a Spanish force gathering in the ports of Biscay had been rife in England, and Charles was well content to make more of these rumours than they were really worth. To meet the danger, a fleet of a hundred sail was to be brought together to guard the coast, and another fleet of forty sail, with the assistance of a Dutch contingent, was to seek out the enemy in his own harbours.[2] In order to find means to support so large an expenditure, Charles's first thought had been to order the sheriffs to assemble the freeholders in the several counties, and to take their votes for a direct grant of the subsidies to which a factious Parliament had refused to agree.[3] The project was however abandoned in this hazardous form, and on July 7 letters were despatched to all justices of the peace, bidding them to acquaint their counties with the requirements of the State, and to exhort them that, as the House of Commons had judged four subsidies to be needed for the defence of the country, they should, in a case of such necessity, be a law to themselves, and should lovingly, freely, and voluntarily supply that which might have been levied by law if the Act had passed.[4]

June 15. Plan for asking the freeholders to vote subsidies.

July 7. A free gift proposed.

For money which was to be extracted directly from his subjects' purses it was necessary to go through the form of asking their consent. Tonnage and poundage, according to the view taken by the Crown lawyers,

July 8. Tonnage and poundage to be levied.

[1] Rudyerd to Nethersole, July 9; *S. P. Dom.*, xxxi. 39. *Salvetti's Newsletters*, $\frac{\text{June } 30}{\text{July } 10}$, July $\frac{7}{17}$. —— to Mead, June 30; *Court and Times*, i. 116.

[2] Rusdorf to Oxenstjerna, June 15; *Mem.*, ii. 190.

[3] Intended proclamation, June 15; *S. P. Dom.* xxx. 2.

[4] The King to the Justices, July 7; *ibid.*, xxxi. 30, 31.

CHAP. XIII.

1626. July 8.

could be levied without any such formality. Once more, as after the dissolution at Oxford, orders were given to continue the collection of the duties, the King declaring that he could not do without them, and that they must therefore be gathered in till Parliament had leisure to make the usual arrangements.[1]

Dismissal of justices of the peace.

A stroke of the pen was as yet sufficient to ensure the regular payment of tonnage and poundage. Almost at the moment when Charles was appealing to the people for a free gift, he purified the Commission of the Peace by the dismissal of those persons who were likely to oppose that measure. Eliot and Phelips, Seymour and Alford, Mansel and Digges, ceased to bear the honours of justice of the peace in their respective counties. On that list of those judged unworthy to serve the Crown, stands the name of Sir Thomas Wentworth, once more associated with those of the leaders of the opposition, as it had been upon the sheriffs' list the year before.[2]

Wentworth amongst them.

Position of Wentworth.

A Government which could alienate men so opposed to one another as Eliot and Wentworth must indeed have gone far astray. Eliot's course in the last Parliament was too decided to call for any additional explanation of the causes which made all further co-operation between him and Buckingham impossible. But Wentworth stood on a very different footing with the Court. He was himself longing to enter the service of the Crown, and his frequent overtures to the govern-

[1] Act of Council, July 8; *Council Register.* Commission, July 26; *Rymer*, xviii. 737.

[2] Wentworth's name is happily on the list in Coventry's letter to the Clerk of the Crown, July 8 (*Harl. MSS.*, 286, fol. 297), from which I have at last, after giving up the search entirely, been able to recover the date of his dismissal, and to bring the fact into connection with the known events of history. The list contains fifteen names for ten counties. It is manifestly imperfect, as we learn that Phelips was also dismissed from the *Hist. MSS. Commission Reports*, iii. 182.

ing powers have exposed him to the suspicion of those who misunderstood alike his character and his principles. CHAP. XIII.

1626. July 8. Wentworth a reformer.

The reforming spirit was strong in Wentworth. To him England was a stage on which there was much to be done, many abuses to be overthrown, many interested and ignorant voices to be silenced. Since the days when Bacon had been a member of the House of Commons no man's voice had been raised so frequently in favour of new legislation. Legislation was the only mode in which, as a member of the House of Commons, he could proceed to action. But there could be little doubt that he would prefer a shorter course. Power in his own hands would be very welcome to him from whatever quarter it came. At first he was content to ask for local authority in his native Yorkshire. He had long ago driven his rival Sir John Savile from the post of *Custos Rotulorum* of the West Riding, and having that dignity in his hands, he had, during the last years of James, been constantly seeking for higher employment.

His desire for power.

A courtier in the ordinary sense of the word Wentworth never was,—never by any possibility could become. He could not learn, like the Conways and the Cokes, to bear a patron's yoke. Whatever his heart conceived his mouth would speak. And whatever position he occupied he was certain to magnify his office. If he had been in Becket's place he would have striven for the King as Chancellor, and for the Church as Archbishop. As a member of the Commons in 1621 he had rebelled against James's attempt to refuse to the assembly of which he formed a part the right of giving counsel to its sovereign. In 1624 the tide of affairs seemed to have stranded him for ever. To his mind the King and the nation appeared to have gone mad together. What side was he

Wentworth in earlier Parliaments.

CHAP. XIII. 1626.

to choose when all England rushed with one consent into war with Spain? All war, unless it were a war of defence, was hateful to Wentworth. He would leave the Continent to itself to fight its own battles. England, he thought, had enough to do within its own borders. Whilst Buckingham was planning fantastic schemes, and Coke and Phelips were cheering him on to shed the blood of Englishmen like water, Wentworth could but stand aside and wait till the excitement had run its course, and till there was again time to think of legislation and reform for England.

1625. He opposes Buckingham.

In 1625 the tide had begun to ebb. If Wentworth had little sympathy with the leaders of the opposition, his place was naturally by their side. He could join them in refusing or paring down the supplies which Buckingham needed for the war. But he joined them as one who would gladly be spared the task of resisting the wishes of his sovereign.

Wentworth, in short, was with the opposition, but not of it. Charles acknowledged the difference between his resistance and that of Seymour and Phelips. He took care to include him in the penal list of sheriffs, but he spoke of him with kindness, as one who might yet be won. Wentworth justified the preference. His objection was not against Charles's system of government, but against the policy pursued by the King and his minister. Consequently, he refused to take measures to evade the restriction placed upon him. "My rule," he said, "which I will never transgress, is never to contend with the prerogative out of Parliament, nor yet to contest with a king but when I am constrained thereunto, or else make shipwreck of my peace of conscience, which I trust God will ever bless me with, and with courage too to preserve it." He would for the present 'fold himself up in a cold, silent

But is not thorough in his opposition.

forbearance, and wait expecting that happy night that the King shall cause his chronicles to be read, wherein he shall find the faithfulness of Mardocheus, the treason of his eunuchs, and then let Haman look to himself.'[1]

Even if Haman here meant Buckingham, the feeling thus expressed had nothing of the fierce earnestness which drove Eliot to track out the footsteps of misgovernment with the enduring steadfastness of a bloodhound. Nothing would induce Wentworth to make himself partaker in Haman's misdeeds. But he had no objection to pay a stately court to Haman, or to accept from him such favours as might be consistent with an honourable independence. In January 1626, before Parliament met, having heard a rumour that Lord Scrope was about to resign the Presidency of the Council of the North, he wrote to Conway to ask for the appointment.[2] In such a post there would be nothing to implicate him in the foreign policy which he disliked. The rumour proved false, and Wentworth gained nothing by his request. Later in the spring, however, he drew still more closely to the Court. Whilst the Commons were bringing their charges against Buckingham, he came up to London and was introduced to the Duke by his friend Weston. Buckingham assured him of his desire 'to contract a friendship with him.'[3]

Went-worth asks for the Presidency of the Council of the North.

His overtures to Buckingham.

Whether Wentworth meant anything more by these overtures than that he was ready to conform to the custom of the time in paying his court to Buckingham, it is impossible to say. But though his friend Wandesford took a leading part in the Duke's impeachment, it is by no means unlikely that he

Did he favour the impeachment?

[1] Wentworth to Wandesford, Dec. 5, 1625; *Strafford Letters*, i. 32.
[2] Wentworth to Conway, Jan. 20; *S. P. Dom.*, xviii. 110.
[3] Wentworth to Weston, undated, 1626; *Strafford Letters*, i. 34.

CHAP. XIII. 1626.

may have himself regarded the proceedings of the Commons with disfavour. That the Commons might give counsel to the King, and that if that counsel were rejected, might proceed to a refusal of subsidies, was a doctrine which Wentworth had advocated by word and action. But he had never shown any inclination to support the theory that the Commons had the right of meddling directly or indirectly with the King's ministers; and though he would doubtless have been well pleased if Charles had dismissed Buckingham of his own motion, he may very well have refused his sympathy with an attempt to force Charles to dismiss him whether he wished it or not. Wentworth was just the man to doubt whether the King's government could be carried on on such conditions.

July. Dismissal of Wentworth.

The scene changes rapidly. In June Parliament is dissolved and Buckingham is triumphant. Then comes the Lord Keeper's letter of the 8th of July. When it reaches York, Wentworth is sitting as High Sheriff in his court. The letter is handed to him, and the proud, high-spirited man learns that he is no longer to call himself a justice of the peace. The office of *Custos Rotulorum*, for which he had struggled so hard, is given to his detested rival, Sir John Savile.[1]

Wentworth's justification.

That Wentworth felt the insult keenly it is unnecessary to say. But he was not the man to betray weakness. In a few measured words he protested his loyalty to the King. He called those around him to witness that he had always loved justice. "Therefore," he added, "shame be from henceforth to them that deserve it. For I am well assured now to enjoy within myself a lightsome quiet as formerly. The

[1] This we learn from a note to the list in Coventry's letter; see p. 78. In the same way Sir D. Foulis succeeded Sir Thomas Hoby in the North Riding, and the Earl of Hertford Sir F. Seymour in Wiltshire.

world may well think I knew a way which would have kept my place. I confess indeed it had been too dear a purchase, and so I leave it." [1]

1626. July.

The bystanders doubtless understood this language better than those who have, perhaps not unnaturally, seen in this attack upon Wentworth the fountain of his opposition in the next Parliament. If words mean anything, Wentworth was deprived of office because he was already in opposition. It was not a thunderbolt out of a clear sky which struck him. He distinctly intimated that he might have kept the place if he had chosen. There was something which he might have done, which he had refused to do.

Explanation of his dismissal.

What that was is entirely matter for conjecture. But it is highly probable that Wentworth had been asked to countenance the collection of the free gift, and that he had refused to do so. It is at all events certain that he could not possibly have used his official influence in its support without sacrificing his self-respect. The old doctrine of the constitution was that money needed for war must be voted by Parliament. Wentworth would feel probably more than any other man in England the importance of maintaining this doctrine intact. To spend money upon the war with Spain was, in his eyes, as bad as throwing it into the sea. And was he to be made a tool of such a policy as this? Was he to go round amongst the freeholders begging them to support the Crown in so ruinous an infatuation? Well may he have refused to demean himself so low.

It was the necessary consequence of the unhappy course which Charles was pursuing that he could not fail to alienate all who had it in their power to serve him best. But he still believed himself to be possessed of the confidence of the people. On July 8, the very

July 8. Orders for the musters.

[1] Wentworth's speech, *Strafford Letters*, i. 36.

CHAP. XIII.

1626. July.

day on which the dismissal of the justices was resolved on, orders were issued for carrying on the usual musters with more than ordinary diligence. It looks as if Charles was appealing from a faction to the body of the nation.[1]

The free gift in Middlesex.

In the hands of Charles such an appeal was not likely to be successful, especially when it took the shape of a demand for money. The first attempt to collect the free gift was made in Westminster Hall. Cries of "A Parliament, a Parliament!" were raised on every side, and only thirty persons, all of them known to be in the King's service, agreed to pay. In the rest of Middlesex and Kent similar failures were reported,[2] and the Council was driven to gild the pill by a declaration explaining away the compulsory character of the

July 26.

demand. There was no intention, they said, of asking for four subsidies as if the Commons' resolution had been in any way binding upon the nation. All that was meant had been to show what was the opinion of Parliament on the amount required for the defence of the country.

Aug. Refusal of the counties.

In a few days the answers began to come in. All through August and the first fortnight of September, the tale of resistance went up with almost uniform monotony. Here and there a handful of loyalists offered a poor tribute of a few pounds. Here and there a county based its refusal on its poverty rather than on its disinclination to give. But the great majority spoke out clearly. They would give in Parliament. Out of Parliament they would not give at all. The figment of a nation passing by its representatives to fly to the support of its King was demonstrated to be without a shadow of foundation.[3]

[1] Instructions for Musters, July 8; *S. P. Dom.*, xxxi. 34.

[2] Mead to Stuteville, July 24; *Court and Times*, i. 130. *Council Register*, July 26.

[3] The answers will be found amongst the Domestic State Papers in

CHAP. XIII.

1626. Aug.

After this, unless Charles was prepared either to make peace with Spain, or to summon another Parliament, one course only remained. The English constitution had grown up around the belief that the King was in very truth the centre of the national life. Precedents as ancient, and to the full as continuous, as the protests against tyranny and misgovernment which had been quoted in the House of Commons, told how the kings of England had been accustomed to call, not in vain, upon their subjects, to put no strict construction upon their local or individual rights in times of national danger. In reality nothing could be more perilous than to gather up these precedents as a rule of government at a time when the spirit which had animated them was being violated at every turn. Yet this peril, apparently without the least suspicion that there was any peril at all, Charles was determined to confront.

Charles resolves to follow precedents.

One of these precedents had already been followed before the appeal for the free gift had been made. The fleet which had taken Cadiz in Elizabeth's reign had been partly supplied with ships by a levy on the maritime counties. The same course was to be adopted now, and the shires along the coast were ordered to join the port towns in setting out a fleet of fifty-six ships.[1] Few of the shires were hardy enough to dispute the precedent, and they mostly contented themselves with an effort to shift as much as possible of the burden upon their neighbours. The Dorsetshire magistrates, who took higher ground, were sharply reprimanded by the Council. "State occasions," they

Ships to be found by the maritime counties.

August and September. Berkshire was the first to refuse, on the 5th of August.

[1] List of ports charged with furnishing ships, June; *S. P. Dom.*, xxx. 81.

CHAP. XIII.

1626. July 24. Resistance of the City of London.

were told, "and the defence of the kingdom in times of extraordinary danger, do not guide themselves by ordinary precedents." The City of London having ventured to argue that the twenty ships at which they were assessed were a larger number than had been required from them in former times, were still more soundly rated. "Whereas," they were answered, "they mention precedents, they may know that the precedents of former times were obedience and not direction, and that there are also precedents of punishment of those who disobey his Majesty's commandments signified by the Board in the case of the preservation of the State, which they hope there shall be no occasion to let them more particularly understand."

Aug. 11.

Aug. 15. The City gives way.

Aug. 12. Willoughby's fleet at Portsmouth.

On the 15th the City gave way.[1] But it would be some time before the ships thus obtained would be ready for sea. In the meanwhile a fleet of thirty-nine ships had been gathering at Portsmouth, under the command of Lord Willoughby. It had been given out that it would sail on August 12,[2] to fall upon the transports in the Biscay harbours, and if possible to intercept the Mexico fleet, and to succeed where Wimbledon had failed the year before. But August 12 came, and nothing was ready. Provisions for the voyage were not forthcoming, and the men, left without the necessaries of life, were deserting as fast as they could.[3] By Buckingham's own confession the King was incurring a debt of 4,000*l.* a month because he could not lay his hand upon 14,000*l.* to discharge some utterly useless mariners by paying off their arrears.[4]

[1] Proceedings in Council, July 24, Aug. 11, 15; *Council Register.*
[2] List of ships, *S. P. Dom.*, xxxii. 74.
[3] Gyffard to Nicholas, Aug. 24, 27; *S. P. Dom.*, xxxiv. 28, 39.
[4] *Council Register*, Aug. 23.

New efforts were therefore made to get money. On August 18 the Council directed the sale of 50,000 oz. of the King's plate. On the 26th 20,000 oz. more were disposed of in the same way.[1] Even Buckingham, sanguine as he was, felt in some measure the seriousness of his position. He had broken hopelessly with the leaders of the Commons. But he would do his best to attach the nobility to his cause. A marriage was contrived between his little daughter and another child, the son of Pembroke's brother Montgomery. Pembroke himself, incurring, if report spoke truly, no slight obloquy by his compliance with Buckingham's wishes,[2] was raised to the dignity of Lord Steward, whilst Montgomery succeeded him as Chamberlain. The Earls of Dorset, Salisbury, and Bridgewater, who had supported Buckingham in the last session, were admitted to the Privy Council. If Arundel was still under a cloud, no attempt was made to press hardly upon him, and the advancement of Wallingford, the brother-in-law of the new Earl of Suffolk, to the Earldom of Banbury, may probably be regarded as an overture to the Howards.

Aug. 1°. Sale of plate.

Buckingham and his master had need of more support than could be found in the House of Lords. Nothing had been done to improve the King's relations with France. A commission had, indeed, been issued to enquire into the law of prize.[3] But the French were not convinced that Charles had any intention of withdrawing his extreme pretensions, and a fresh collision might arise at any moment. And this was the time chosen by Charles to effect a domestic revolution, perhaps justifiable in itself, but certain to

[1] *Council Register*, Aug. 18, 26.
[2] Advice from England, Sept. 12; *Brussels MSS.*
[3] Commission, July 11; *Rymer*, xviii. 730.

CHAP. XIII.

cause bitter mortification to his wife and to exasperate her brother more than ever.

1626. June.

Charles and the Queen's French attendants.

For months Charles had felt that, as long as the Queen's French attendants were in England, he could hardly call his wife his own. Her ladies taught her to look upon English men and women with distrust. Her priests taught her to display ostentatiously more than the ordinary humiliations which found favour with her Church. Her complaints of her husband's broken promises met with a warm response in their sympathetic bosoms. When she was in private with her chosen companions she was merry enough, dancing and laughing as if no shadow of misfortune had ever crossed her path. She reserved her ill-humour for her husband, and in his presence bore herself as a martyr. The winter before he had thought of sending the whole company back to France. But the marriage contract was against him, and he desisted for a time. Then came fresh disputes and recriminations. The Queen wished to name some amongst her French attendants to take charge of her jointure. Charles refused his permission. One night after the pair were in bed, there were high words between them. "Take your lands to yourself," said the offended wife. "If I have no power to put whom I will into those places, I will have neither lands nor houses of you. Give me what you think fit by way of pension." Charles fell back upon his dignity. "Remember," he said, "to whom you speak. You ought not to use me so." In reply, she broke out into mere fretfulness. She was miserable, she said. She had no power to place servants, and businesses succeeded the worse for her recommendation. She was not of that base quality to be used so ill. She ran on for some time, refusing to listen to her husband's explanation. "Then," wrote Charles afterwards, in

Quarrel about the jointure.

CHAP. XIII.

giving an account of the scene, "I made her both hear me, and end that discourse."[1]

1626. June.

Charles's displeasure is not likely to have been softened by any real insight into his wife's difficulties, or by sympathy with the poor child's natural clinging to those who alone shared her feelings and her prejudices in a strange land. It was not long before a fresh cause of offence arose. On June 26[2] the Queen obtained leave to spend some time in retirement, in order to give herself to a special season of devotion. After a long day spent in attendance upon the services of her Church at the chapel at St. James's, she strolled out with her attendants to breathe the fresh evening air in St. James's Park. By and by she found her way into Hyde Park, and by accident or design directed her steps towards Tyburn. In her position it was but natural that she should bethink herself of those who had suffered there as martyrs for that faith which she

The Queen at Tyburn.

[1] Instructions for Carleton, printed in Ludlow's *Memoirs* (ed. 1751), 459. I rather suspect the date given as July 12, should be July 22, as the other instructions (*S. P. France*) are dated July 23.

[2] This date of the Jubilee is distinctly given in Salvetti's letter, $\frac{\text{June } 30}{\text{July } 10}$, and is nearly in agreement with Bassompierre's statement (*Ambassade*, 185) that more than six weeks passed between the visit to Tyburn and the notice taken of it on July 31. If the 26th of June was the day, there would be exactly five weeks, and Bassompierre may be allowed a little exaggeration. Miss Strickland's notion (*Queens of England*, 237) that the visit to Hyde Park took place in 1625, founded on a blunder in an English translation of Bassompierre's speech, receives no countenance from the original (*Ambassade*, 185). If Miss Strickland consulted Pory's letter in the *Court and Times*, in which the visit is said to have taken place on St. James's day last, its date as there given, July 1, may have confirmed her in her idea that 'St. James's day last' meant July 25, 1625. But the Queen was not in London at that date, and the date July 1 is a blunder of the Editor. In the original it is July 5, as printed by Sir H. Ellis (ser. 1, iii. 244). Internal evidence, however, shows that it was really written on Aug. 5, and Pory must therefore have meant July 25, 1626, an impossible date. St. James's day perhaps arose out of some confusion with St. James's Park.

CHAP. XIII.

1626. July.

had come to England to support. What wonder if her heart beat more quickly, and if some prayer for strength to bear her weary lot rose to her lips?

The story told to Charles.

A week or two probably passed away before the tale reached Charles, exaggerated in its passage through the mouths of men. There was no compassion in him for the disappointment to which he had given rise in his wife's child-heart, by the promises which had been made only to be broken—a disappointment which was none the less real because she could frolic amongst her companions with all the gaiety of her nation and her age. The Queen of England, he was told, had been conducted on a pilgrimage to offer prayer to dead traitors who had suffered the just reward of their crimes. The cup of his displeasure was now full. Whatever the contract might say, those who had brought her to this should no longer remain in England.

Something, however, must be done to diminish the indignation with which the news would be received in France. An excuse was found for sending Carleton on a special embassy to Lewis, in order that he might be at hand to explain everything away. As soon as it was known that Carleton was safely on the other side of the Channel, Charles proceeded to carry out his intentions.

July 31. The dismissal of the French.

On July 31 the King and Queen dined together at Whitehall. After dinner he conducted her into his private apartments, locked the door upon her attendants, and told her that her servants must go. In the meanwhile Conway was informing the members of her household that the King expected them to remove to Somerset House, where they would learn his pleasure. The Bishop of Mende raised some objections, and the women 'howled and lamented as if they had been

CHAP XIII.

1626.

going to execution.' The yeomen of the guard interfered, and cleared the apartments.

Charles had a less easy task. As soon as the young Queen perceived what was being done, she flew to the window and dashed to pieces the glass, that her voice might once more be heard by those who were bidding her adieu for the last time. Charles, it is said, dragged her back unto the room with her hands bleeding from the energy with which she clung to the bars. The next day Conway visited Somerset House and told the angry crowd that they must leave the country, with two or three exceptions which had been made at the Queen's entreaty. Presents to the amount of 22,000*l.* were offered them, and they were told that if anything was owing to them it should be paid out of the remainder of the Queen's portion, which had been detained in France in consequence of the misunderstanding between the Courts.[1]

July 31. The Queen's anger.

They refused to obey, and clung to England as their right. For some days they remained at Somerset House in spite of all orders to the contrary. Charles lost his patience. "I command you," he wrote to Buckingham, "to send all the French away to-morrow out of town. If you can, by fair means—but stick not long in disputing—otherwise force them away, driving them away like so many wild beasts until ye have shipped them, and so the Devil go with them."

Aug. 7. The French finally expelled.

The King's pleasure was executed. At first the French refused to move till they were ordered by their own King to do so. The next morning the yeomen of the guard were marched down to Somerset House, and there was no more resistance. With the exception of

Aug. 8.

[1] Pory to Mead, Aug. 5 (not July 5), *Ellis*, ser. 1, iii. 237. Private instructions to Carleton, July 23; Conway to Carleton, Aug. 9; *S. P. France.* Richelieu, *Mémoires*, iii. 176. *Contarini's Despatch*, Aug. $\frac{11}{21}$.

CHAP. XIII.

1626. Aug. 8. a few personal attendants specially named, the whole of the foreigners were conducted to Dover and were there embarked for France as soon as the wind served.[1]

Aug. 11. Resentment of Lewis. What would Lewis say to this high-handed transaction? Carleton told his story in France as well as he could. The King answered him sharply. His sister, he said, had been treated cruelly. Charles had plainly broken his promise. An ambassador of his own, Marshal Bassompierre, should be sent to investigate the affair. When he had received his report he would say what he would do. From this resolution Carleton was never able to move him, and was finally recalled to England, having effected nothing.[2]

Distress for money. It was a badly chosen moment to offend the King of France. The want of money was more crying every day. On August 17 some two hundred soldiers and sailors, hopeless of obtaining their pay at Portsmouth, flocked up to London, stopped the Duke's coach, and presented their complaint. Buckingham promised to satisfy them later in the day, slipped home by water, and placed himself beyond their reach.[3]

Proposal to debase the coin. All attempts, too, to fill the exchequer were breaking down. The free gift had come to nothing. A resolution to issue Privy seals in the old way was not persisted in.[4] Much, however, was hoped from the issue of debased coin, and the Mint had been busy for some weeks in preparing the light pieces. But the City merchants remonstrated strongly, and Sir Robert Cotton was heard on their behalf before the Council.

[1] The King to Buckingham, Aug. 7; Pory to Mead, Aug. 11, 17; *Ellis*, ser. 1, iii. 244, 245, 247.

[2] Carleton to Conway, Aug. 13; *S. P. France.*

[3] Pory to Mead, Aug. 17; *Ellis*, ser. 1, iii. 247.

[4] The King to the Council, Aug. 14; *S. P. Dom.*, xxxiii. 101.

CHAP. XIII.

1626. Aug.

The King himself was present, and in spite, it is said, of the opposition of Buckingham, refused to agree to the iniquitous proposal. The new pieces were declared by proclamation not to be current coin of the realm.[1]

High language at Court.

In spite of all these increasing difficulties, there were men at Court who held high language still. Dorset, who had completely thrown in his lot with the high prerogative doctrines which now found favour with Charles, talked of the impossibility of a rebellion in a country where there were no fortresses, and asserted that, as it was the duty of the people to maintain the war, the King would only have to take irregularly what he had failed to obtain from Parliament.[2]

The campaign in Germany.

In the midst of these perplexities, bad news arrived from Germany. To all outward appearance the position of the King of Denmark at the opening of the campaign of 1626 was extremely strong. He had one army under his own command in Lower Saxony. Another army under Mansfeld was on the east bank of the Elbe. Other troops were pushing forward in Westphalia. The peasants had risen in Austria. Bethlen Gabor had engaged to fall upon the Emperor's hereditary dominions from the east. It was true that Christian had now to do with another enemy in addition to Tilly. Wallenstein had brought against him that strange army, self-supporting and self-governed, which, in the name of the Emperor, was so soon to become a power in the empire almost independent of the Emperor himself. Yet it seemed not unlikely, judging from numbers alone, that Christian and his allies would be strong enough to make head against Tilly and Wallenstein combined. But from the beginning one circumstance was against him. His finances were in-

[1] — to Mead, Sept. 8; *Court and Times*, i. 145.

[2] *Contarini's Despatch*, $\frac{\text{Aug. 25}}{\text{Sept. 4}}$.

CHAP. XIII.

1626. Aug.

adequate to meet the strain. He had calculated that Charles would and could keep his word, and that 30,000*l.* a month would flow into his military chest from the English exchequer. Then had come the refusal of subsidies by Parliament. The payments, scarcely begun in May 1625, stopped altogether. Christian had levied soldiers on the faith of the English alliance, and his soldiers were clamouring for their pay.[1] To stand on the defensive was impossible. But there was no unity of command in the united armies.

Mansfeld's defeat.

In May Mansfeld made a dash southwards, and was defeated by Wallenstein at the Bridge of Dessau. Before the summer ended he was hurrying through Silesia with Wallenstein hard upon his heels, hoping to combine with Bethlen Gabor for a joint attack upon Austria and Bohemia.

Aug. 17. Christian's defeat at Lutter.

Then came the turn of Christian of Denmark. To him too a defensive war was impossible without Charles's money. An attempt to slip past Tilly and to make his way toward Bethlen Gabor in Bohemia proved vain. Tilly, reinforced by some of Wallenstein's regiments, started in pursuit and overtook him at Lutter. After a sanguinary battle the Danish King was completely defeated, and North Germany lay open to the Imperialists.

Sept. 12. Charles receives the news.

The news of the disaster, for which the English Government was so largely responsible, reached Charles on September 12.[2] Now that it was too late he talked

[1] Anstruther's despatches (*S. P. Denmark*) give a good insight into these financial difficulties.

[2] If, as seems almost certain, the following undated letter was written at this time, we get from it Buckingham's feeling about the matter:—'My dear Master,—This noble lord hath this day behaved himself like your faithful servant. He is able to relate to you what hath passed. I will only say this, that already your brother and sister are thrust out of their inheritance. If the news be true that runs current here, your uncle is in a very ill estate. There is much difference between the cases. The one, with the help of your people, brought you into this business, and yourself brought the other. The times require something to be done

of raising 10,000 men for his uncle's service, and ordered the sale of a large quantity of plate. He came at once to London, and sat for four hours in the Council, a feat which he had seldom performed before. When the Council was over he sent for the Danish ambassador, and assured him that he would stake his crown and his life in his defence. With the tears almost standing in his eyes, he reminded the Dane that he was in distress for his own personal needs.

The four regiments in the Netherlands to go to Denmark.

The matter was discussed anxiously in the Council. The most feasible project seemed to be to send on the four volunteer regiments in the Netherlands, whose term of service would expire in November. But there was a difficulty in the way. The men, like most others in Charles's service, had not been paid for some months, and how was money to be found?[1]

The first instinct of the Government was to apply to the City for a loan. But the Lord Mayor and Aldermen had not forgotten the sharp message about the ships, and closed their purses tightly.

Sept. 27. Bassompierre's arrival.

Such was the position of affairs when on September 27 Bassompierre arrived in London. Everything had been done by Charles, since the expulsion of the French, to soothe the injured feelings of the Queen. A new household of noble English ladies, amongst whom Buckingham's wife and mother and sister were of course numbered, was formed to minister to her dignity. But the deprivation which she suffered from the absence of the old familiar faces, and the

Treatment of the Queen.

and that speedily, and the more it appears to be yours, certainly the better success will follow. Strike while the iron is hot, and let your uncle at the least see you were touched with the news. So, in haste, I kiss your Majesty's hands, as your humble slave, STEENIE.' Buckingham to the King, *Harl. MSS.*, 6988, fol. 74.

[1] *Contarini's Despatch*, Sept. $\frac{15}{25}$. — to Mead, Sept. 15; *Court and Times*, i. 148.

CHAP. XIII.

1626. Sept. 27.

silence of the old familiar accents of her mother-tongue weighed heavily upon her spirits, and, in spite of the sedulous attentions of her husband, a sullen melancholy pervaded her features.[1]

The King's feeling about France.

The King's desire to please his wife did not extend to a desire to please her countrymen. To the Venetian ambassador he complained openly of the treachery and insincerity of the French. Buckingham was still more bitter. He gave orders that Bassompierre should be treated on his arrival with studied rudeness. He summoned Soubise to London, and talked with him for hours about the state of France.[2]

If any man was capable of smoothing away the difficulties in his course it was Bassompierre. He knew the world well, and he had that power of seizing upon the strong point of his opponent's case which goes far to the making of a successful diplomatist. To the young Queen he gave the best possible advice; told her to make the best of her situation, and warned her of the folly of setting herself against the current ideas of the country in which she lived and of the man to whom she was married. In the question of the household he was at the same time firm and conciliatory. He acknowledged that Charles had a genuine grievance, that the Queen would never be a real wife to him as long as she was taught by a circle of foreigners to regard herself as permanently a foreigner; whilst at the same time he spoke boldly of the breach of the contract which had been committed. In the end he gained the confidence both of the King and of Buckingham, and with the assent of the King of France a new arrangement was agreed to, by which a certain

Oct. Bassompierre's negotiation on the household.

[1] *Contarini's Despatch*, $\frac{\text{Aug. 25}}{\text{Sept. 4}}$.

[2] *Ibid.*, $\frac{\text{Sept. 23}}{\text{Oct. 3}}$.

number of French persons would be admitted to attend upon the Queen, whilst a great part of the household was to be formed of natives of England. CHAP. XIII. 1626.

The maritime questions at issue were discussed by Bassompierre in the same spirit. He was ready to admit the reasonableness of the English in objecting to a large trade carried on between Spain and Flanders under the French flag. But he wished to see some arrangement come to by which the perpetual interference of the English cruisers could be obviated. And but for events which occurred to exasperate both nations, a commercial treaty laying down the terms on which neutrals should be liable to arrest might perhaps have been the result of Bassompierre's mission.[1] Oct. On the commercial disputes.

Unfortunately Charles was not disposed to withdraw any one of his pretensions whilst the negotiations were pending. In October Lord Willoughby's fleet contrived at last to put to sea, met with a severe storm in the Bay of Biscay against which the ill-found vessels were incompetent to struggle, and was driven back to the English ports without accomplishing anything. But before it sailed, a squadron under Lord Denbigh had captured three Rouen vessels of immense value, on the suspicion that they were laden with Spanish property.[2] Public opinion in France was greatly excited, and a fresh decree was issued by the Parliament of Rouen for the sequestration of English goods.[3] Yet the English Court did not contemplate the probability of a breach. In the beginning of November it was announced that Sir George Goring would go to France to clear up all difficulties. Buckingham was by this time once more in that frame of mind in which Willoughby's fleet. Sept. 18. Three French ships taken by Denbigh. Oct. 10. Nov. Goring to go to France.

[1] *Ambassade de Bassompierre.*

[2] Denbigh to Buckingham, Sept. 21; *S. P. Dom.*, xxxvi. 31.

[3] An English merchant at Rouen to Ferrar, Oct. $\frac{11}{21}$; *S. P. France.*

CHAP. XIII. 1626.

all things seemed easy, all the more because he had reason to believe that the financial difficulties which had plagued him so long were at last at an end.

The forced loan.

In the course of September some clever man, not improbably Sir Allen Apsley,[1] suggested that though the King had found difficulties in raising a so-called free gift, there might be less difficulty in the way of raising a forced loan. The Statute of Benevolences, it may have been urged, stood clearly in the way of any attempt to make the gift compulsory. But forced loans under the name of Privy seals were perfectly familiar to all Englishmen, and it would only be necessary to extend the system a little further. It is only due to Charles that he should be heard in defence of the proposal. In a letter which Abbot was required to circulate in all the dioceses of England, Charles called upon the Church to aid the necessities of the State. After dwelling at length upon the evil consequences of the defeat of Lutter, the King went over the old story how he had been led into war by the counsel of Parliament. "This," he wrote, "upon their persuasions and promises of all assistance and supply we readily undertook and effected, and cannot now be left in that business but with the sin and shame of all men. Sir, because aid and supply for the defence of the kingdom and the like affairs of State, especially such as are advised by Parliamentary counsel, are due to the King from his people by all law both of God and men; and shame if they forsake the King while he pursues their own counsel just and honourable, and which could not, under God, but have been successful

Sept. 21. The King's circular.

[1] At least he afterwards claimed to have been the original of bringing 400,000*l.* to his Majesty. And though the loan produced less than 300,000*l.*, I am at a loss to think of any other scheme which produced nearly so much. Apsley to Nicholas, Feb. 2, 1628; *S. P. Dom.*, xcii. 18.

if he had been followed and supplied in time, as we desired and laboured for." The greatest evil of Church and State, Charles went on to say, was the breach of unity. The clergy were to preach unity and charity, and to exhort the people to prayers for themselves and for the King of Denmark.[1]

Two days after this letter was written, and before there was time to put it in circulation, a first attempt to collect the loan was made in the county of Middlesex. The sum to be paid was fixed at five subsidies, an amount far greater than had ever been raised upon Privy seals. The Commissioners were directed, first to lend money themselves, and then to summon before them all men rated in the Subsidy Books. Any one who refused to lend was to be required to swear whether he had been prompted in his refusal by another person, and if he would neither lend nor swear, then to be bound over to answer for his contempt before the Privy Council.[2]

Sept. 23. The Commission for Middlesex.

Westminster was chosen as the scene of the first meeting of the Commissioners. In the parishes of St. Margaret's and St. Martin's, lying as they did under the very eye of the Court, little difficulty was made. In the parishes about the Strand there was more disturbance. When the country parts of Middlesex were summoned, the majority of those who came agreed to pay, and the Government was encouraged to apply to the other counties in the neighbourhood of London.[3]

Oct. Proceedings in Westminster.

The moment at which success seemed to be dawning upon the Court was chosen to deal a blow at the man who had done more than any one else to frustrate

[1] The King to Abbot, Sept. 21; *Wilkins*, iv. 471.
[2] Commission and Instructions, Sept. 23; *S. P. Dom.*, xxxvi. 42, 43.
[3] — to Mead, Oct. 6, 20; *Court and Times*, i. 154, 159.

CHAP. XIII.

1626. Oct.

its hopes. As soon as Eliot returned home, all the swarm of Buckingham's adherents fell upon him. Foremost of all was Sir James Bagg, the man who coveted Eliot's office, and who never signed a letter to the Duke without subscribing himself his 'humble slave.' Charges and complaints were easy to bring together when they were welcome to those who received them, and on October 25 they were brought into such shape as to induce the Privy Council to pronounce Eliot unworthy any longer to exercise the duties of his office. The Vice-Admiralty of Devon was made over to Sir James Bagg, and to a kindred spirit, Sir John Drake.

Oct. 25. Sequestration of Eliot's Vice-Admiralty.

Buckingham's heart was again full of triumph. In the beginning of November it had not only been finally decided to send the four regiments in Holland to the assistance of the King of Denmark, but arrangements had been made for paying them, at least for a time.[1] In his conversations with Bassompierre, Buckingham had much to say about the revival of the French alliance, and on November 5 he adroitly took the opportunity of a magnificent entertainment given by him to the ambassador at York House to signify the hopes which he had founded on the renewal of amity with France. In the masque which the spectators were called upon to admire, Mary of Medici was represented as enthroned in the midst of the celestial deities upon the sea which separated England and France, welcoming the Elector and Electress Palatine, as well as her three daughters, with their husbands the Kings of England and Spain and the Prince of Piedmont.[2] It was the old dream of 1623, with the sub-

Nov. 5. The entertainment at York House.

[1] The King to the States General, Nov. 3; *Add. MSS.*, 17,677, L, fol. 292.

[2] *Salvetti's Newsletter*, Nov. 10.

stitution of Henrietta Maria for the Infanta. In his conversations with Bassompierre he talked freely of the difficulties of the Government from want of money, and something was said of an arrangement to be brought about in Germany by French influence.[1]

So smooth had the waters been running at home since Bassompierre's arrival, that everything seemed possible. The Queen, with occasional outbursts of petulance, was at last on good terms with her husband, and she was carrying on friendly intercourse with the English ladies of her Court, and through them with Buckingham himself. But it was not so easy to make amends for the want of foresight which had postponed so long the settlement of the maritime quarrel between the two countries. An angry crowd interested in the French trade had lately gathered round Bassompierre's door, and had loaded the ambassador with insults. On November 9 a formal petition was presented to the Council by the merchants, asking for the further stay of the French prizes till the goods sequestered at Rouen had been liberated.[2] Buckingham's spirits only rose with the occasion. The knot was worthy of his own personal intervention. Bassompierre should go without the prizes. He should carry with him a few priests set free from prison, but the further concessions promised to the Catholics should for the present be postponed. The extraordinary ambassador about to start for Paris should go to the heart of the difficulty and propose a reasonable settlement of the law of prize, to be followed by a renewed understanding on the general affairs of Europe. Goring was no longer considered fit for a negotiation of such extended dimensions. There

The Queen and Buckingham.

The merchants trading with France protest against the liberation of the prizes.

Buckingham proposes to go to France.

[1] *Contarini's Despatch*, Nov. $\frac{17}{27}$.

[2] Petition, Nov. $\frac{9}{19}$. Bassompierre to Herbault, Nov. $\frac{12}{22}$; *Neg.* 257, 259.

CHAP. XIII.

1626. Nov. 9.

was but one man in England believed by Buckingham to be equal to the task, and that man was himself.[1]

Events were hurrying on too rapidly for Buckingham's control. The example of the Rouen Parliament proved infectious. Four English vessels were stopped off Rochelle. Again the merchants flocked round the Council, begging for letters of marque against the French, and the Council was beginning to share in their excitement. The letters of marque were not issued, but orders were drawn up for a further seizure of French property in England. For the present the King refused to sign them, but fresh news might at any time provoke an act which would involve the two countries in war.[2]

Fresh seizures at Rochelle.

Such news was already on its way.[3] The Duke of Epernon, Governor of Guienne, was one of the many opponents of Richelieu and his policy amongst the French aristocracy. If his motive was to frustrate that policy and to create a breach between France and England he could hardly have acted more cleverly than he did. As a fleet of two hundred English and Scottish vessels, laden with the year's supply of wine, was sailing from Bordeaux, he ordered the seizure of the whole. When the news reached England, it was regarded as a peculiar aggravation of the offence, that he had waited till a new duty of four crowns a tun had been paid, and had thus secured both the money and the wine. This time not the merchants only, but all who drank wine were up in arms. The price

The wine fleet seized at Bordeaux.

[1] The Duke's intention is mentioned by Bassompierre in his letter of Dec. $\frac{2}{12}$, but Contarini knew of it on Nov. $\frac{17}{27}$.

[2] *Contarini's Despatch*, $\frac{\text{Nov. 24}}{\text{Dec. 4}}$.

[3] It reached Bassompierre at Dover on the 24th of November, but was not known in London till later.

of the last year's supply went up rapidly, and it was known that it would soon be exhausted.[1]

1626. Nov. Buckingham's projected embassy.

Even before these last tidings from Bordeaux reached Buckingham, he had discovered that others had not as much confidence as himself in his diplomatic powers. Bassompierre hinted to him pretty plainly that his presence would not be acceptable in France; advice which may to some extent have been founded on the recollection of Buckingham's insolent behaviour to the Queen, but which was fully justified by dislike of the impetuous character of the Duke. Nor was resistance wanting from Buckingham's own family. His wife, his mother, and his sister threw themselves on their knees, imploring him to desist from so hazardous an enterprise.[2] And when the news arrived from Bordeaux the enterprise became more hazardous still. The Council were in favour of instant retaliation. He himself began to partake of the exasperation. But he was all the more convinced that his own personal intervention would clear away the difficulty. Summoning back Bassompierre, who had already reached Dover on his return home, he went down to Canterbury to meet him, and offered to cross the Straits at once in his company to set matters right. Bassompierre had some difficulty in persuading him to wait till an answer could be received from the French Court.[3]

Dec. 4. Buckingham offers to go at once.

It was hardly likely that this overture would be favourably received. On December 3, before Buckingham started for Canterbury, an Order in Council was

Dec. 3. French ships and goods to be seized.

[1] *Contarini's Despatch*, Dec. $\frac{1}{11}$. — to Mead, Dec. 9; *Court and Times*, i. 180.

[2] Bassompierre to Herbault, $\frac{\text{Nov. } 30}{\text{Dec. } 10}$; *Neg.* 297. *Contarini's Despatch*, Dec. $\frac{8}{18}$.

[3] Bassompierre to Lewis XIII., Dec. $\frac{10}{20}$; *Neg.* 307.

CHAP. XIII. 1626.

issued for the seizure of all French ships and goods in English waters.[1]

Yet even then Buckingham still talked of going to Paris as if nothing had happened. He said that till he heard that the King of France had himself refused to see him, he would not believe that his overtures had been rejected. He may well have hesitated to acknowledge that war was inevitable. Every day he was receiving signs of the unpopularity of which he was the object. At Court it was believed that the only object of his embassy was to enable him to make love once more to the Queen of France. When he set out to meet Bassompierre at Canterbury, the mob followed him with curses, shouting after him, "Begone for ever!"[2] whilst reasonable men explained his desire to go to France by his eagerness to be out of England during the session of Parliament which was now naturally enough presumed to be inevitable.

Oct. Prospects of the loan.

Hard pressed as he was, Charles had not the slightest intention of meeting a Parliament. Yet the prospects of the loan were far less favourable in December than they had been at the beginning of November. At first, when the money had been demanded only from the five counties nearest London, it seemed as if a little firmness would bear down all opposition. In Essex, Sir Francis Barrington and Sir William Masham were committed to prison for a few days for refusing to sit upon the Commission, and thirteen poorer men who had been sent down to Portsmouth to serve on board the fleet as a punishment for their refusal to pay, were allowed to go home again after a short detention.

[1] Order in Council, Dec. 3; *S. P. Dom.*, xli. 15.

[2] *Contarini's Despatch*, Dec. $\frac{8}{18}$. The idea about making love to the Queen is frequently mentioned by Contarini, but, I think, without much belief on his part.

CHAP. XIII.

1626. Nov.

After this, little further resistance was made, and the Government, congratulating itself that its difficulties were at an end, prepared to despatch to more distant shires the Privy Councillors who were to take part in the Commissions in order to overawe the counties by their presence.

Resistance of the Judges.

Suddenly opposition arose from an unexpected quarter. The Judges had hitherto borne their share of Benevolences and Privy seals without murmuring, and they now expressed their readiness to pay their quota towards the new loan. But they unanimously refused to acknowledge its legality by putting their hands to paper to express their consent to the demand. Charles, as soon as he heard the objection, hastily sent for the Chief Justice, Sir Randal Crew, and, finding that he would not give way, dismissed him on the spot from his office as an example to the rest.[1]

Nov. 10. Dismissal of the Chief Justice.

If Charles expected to intimidate the other Judges he was quickly undeceived. One and all they refused to give the required signatures unless they were allowed to add that they signed simply to please his Majesty, without any intention of giving their authority to the loan.[2]

A successor was easily found for Crew in Sir Nicholas Hyde, who had been the draughtsman of Buckingham's defence; and the Chief Justiceship of the Common Pleas, which was vacant by Hobart's

[1] Meddus to Mead, Oct. 27, Nov. 4; *Court and Times*, i. 160, 165.

[2] "Sur ce refus, le Roy a envoyé quérir au le principal des juges, lequel ayant refusé de signer, le Roy l'a desmis au mesme instant de sa charge, et puis a envoyé presenter ledit livre aux autres juges, lesquels y ont mis cette clause, que non pour donner exemple au peuple, ny le convier à faire la mesme chose, mais qu'estant interpellés et pressés, pour eviter de fascher sa Majesté ils ont souscrit." Bassompierre, *Neg.* 263. Compare *Contarini's Despatch*, Nov. $\frac{17}{27}$; Meddus to Mead, Nov. 10, 17; *Court and Times*, i. 167, 170. Hyde's formal appointment was on Feb. 5, 1627; *Rymer*, xviii. 835.

CHAP. XIII.

1626. Nov.

death, was filled by Serjeant Richardson, who gave a pledge of his subserviency by marrying a kinswoman of the Duke before he was admitted to the Bench.[1] But the wound inflicted by Charles upon his own authority was not so easily healed. When at any future time he appealed to the Judges against what he regarded as the encroachments of the Commons, it would be remembered that the Judges were no longer disinterested umpires, and that the highest of their number had been dismissed from office because he refused to say that to be legal which he believed to be illegal. The Judges, in short, were to be appealed to as impartial arbiters when they were on the side of the Crown; to be treated with scorn when they ventured to have opinions of their own.

Further refusals.

The news that the Judges had made objections spread like wildfire. Fifteen or sixteen of the Peers, amongst them Essex, Lincoln, Warwick, Clare, Bolingbroke, and Saye, refused to lend. In Hertfordshire a large number of persons who had already given their subscriptions, declared that the opinion given by the Judges had set them free. In the Council the fiery Dorset urged the immediate imprisonment of the recalcitrant Lords. But the majority was against him, and it was resolved to await the effect of the visits of the Privy Councillors to the counties.[2]

Nov. 27. Debate in the Council.

Not even the risk of a failure of the loan could induce Charles to change his policy towards France. On December 3, as has been seen, the order was issued for the seizure of French vessels. On the 8th Bassompierre left Dover with a promise to send back the message which would virtually imply peace or war.[3] In the

Dec. Fear of French maritime force.

[1] Meddus to Mead, Dec. 1; *Court and Times*, i. 175.

[2] Mead to Stuteville, Nov. 25; Meddus to Mead, Dec. 1; *Court and Times*, i. 172, 175. Rudyerd to Nethersole, Dec. 1; *S. P. Dom.*, xli. 3.

[3] Hippisley to Buckingham, Dec. 8; *S. P. Dom.*, xli. 50.

CHAP. XIII. 1626. Nov.

meanwhile everything that passed in France was regarded with jealous scrutiny. The evident determination of Richelieu to make France a maritime nation, that she might no longer go a begging to foreign powers for the means of repressing rebellion amongst her own people, was treated at Whitehall as an insult to the English supremacy at sea, an encroachment upon Charles's rights which Buckingham determined to resist by any means in his power.

Dec. 22. The City ships.

A plan was soon formed. As in 1625, Pennington was entrusted with the secret. Of the twenty ships wrung from the City with so much difficulty, some were now ready and were lying under Pennington's command in the Downs. On the 22nd Charles wrote to Buckingham that six or eight ships purchased by the French King in the Low Countries were at Havre. As they were intended to be employed against England, he was to see that they were sunk or taken.[1] Two days later Buckingham sent Pennington his instructions. "When you shall come where these ships ride," he wrote, "you are, according to your best discretion, to give the captains or commanders of them some occasion to fall out with you and to shoot at you; and thereupon presently, with the best force you can make, you are to repulse the assault, and so to set upon them with your own and all the ships of your fleet as that, having once begun with them, you may be sure, God willing, not to fail to take them, or, if they will not yield, to sink or fire them. If, because they are but a few ships, and, as I am informed, not well manned, they shall not dare, upon any occasion, to meddle first with you, then you are to take occasion to pick some quarrel with them upon some suspicion of their intent to lie there to colour enemy's goods or countenance

Dec. 24. Buckingham orders them to to attack French ships at Havre.

[1] The King to Buckingham, Dec. 23; *S. P. Dom.*, xlii. 67.

CHAP. XIII.

1626. Dec. 24.

his ships, and so to assure or take them, or otherwise to sink them and fire them. In which you are, as you see occasion, to make as probable and just a ground of a quarrel as may be, and if you can, to make it their quarrel, not yours. But howsoever, if you can meet with them you may not fail to take, sink, or fire them."[1]

Dec. 28. Pennington prepares to obey.

With his usual readiness to obey orders as soon as he understood what they meant, Pennington prepared to obey. He had "now fifteen ships altogether;" but he complained that the Londoners had taken no trouble to make the vessels extorted from them worthy of his Majesty's service. The ships themselves were 'very mean things.' They were undermanned, and those who had been sent on board were chiefly landsmen and boys. With two of the King's ships he would undertake to beat the whole fleet.[2]

1627. Jan. Pennington does nothing.

The value of Pennington's squadron was not to be tested this time. Buckingham had been completely misinformed. Havre roads were empty, and after a few days' cruise Pennington arrived at Falmouth, having done nothing at all, except that he had fired into ten Dutch men of war, believing them to be Dunkirkers. He was himself not well pleased with the result. "Consider," he wrote to Buckingham, "what a desperate employment you put upon me, to be sent out at this time of year with three weeks' victual; having long dark nights, base ships, and ill-fitted with munition and worse manned, so that if we come to any service it is almost impossible we can come off with honour or safety."[3]

Final demands of France.

Whilst Pennington was still at sea,[4] the final de-

[1] Secret instructions from Buckingham to Pennington, Dec. 24; *S. P. Dom.*, xlii. 81.

[2] Pennington to Buckingham, Dec. 28; *S. P. Dom.*, xlii. 100.

[3] Pennington to Buckingham, Jan. 10; *S. P. Dom.*, xlviii. 26.

[4] The letter in Bassompierre's Negotiations (312) is undated, but was doubtless written in the end of December, as Clerke is mentioned in it.

CHAP. XIII.
1627. Jan.

termination of Lewis was placed in Charles's hands. Bassompierre's plan for settling the Queen's household, which had been even more favourable to France than a scheme of which Lewis had expressed his approval in October,[1] was now entirely disavowed. The King of France, Charles was to be informed, was unwilling to accept anything short of the complete execution of the marriage contract. Nevertheless, at his mother's intercession, he would consent to some changes, though they were to be far fewer than those to which his ambassador had agreed. As for the ships, if the King of England would fix a day for liberating the French prizes, he would do the same on his side.

Their rejection.

The answer was regarded in England as a personal affront. Buckingham informed Richelieu that his master now considered himself free from all former obligations about the household, and that France, having begun the seizure of the English vessels unjustly, must be the first to make reparation.[2]

Cause of the rupture with France.

Open war could hardly be averted much longer. The marriage treaty of 1624, so fair in its promise, had borne its bitter fruits. The attempt to bind too closely nations differing in policy and religion had failed. The English Government had made up its mind to involve Catholic France in a declared war in defence of Protestantism in Germany. The French Government had made up its mind to secure toleration for the English Catholics. When hopes that should never have been entertained failed to be realised, there was disappointment and irritation on both sides. Then came the interference of Charles on behalf of Rochelle, the quarrel about the prize goods, and the quarrel

[1] Lewis XIII. to Bassompierre, Oct. $\frac{21}{31}$; *Neg.* 153.

[2] Buckingham to Richelieu, Jan. (?) 1627; Crowe's *Hist. of France*, iii. 551.

CHAP. XIII. 1627. Jan.

about the Queen's household, all of them perhaps capable of settlement between Governments anxious to find points of agreement, but almost impossible of settlement between Governments already prepared to take umbrage at one another's conduct.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE EXPEDITION TO RHÉ.

CHAP. XIV.

1627. Jan.

How was England to fight France and Spain?

How was the Government which had failed so signally in making war against Spain, to make war against France and Spain at the same time? Even at Charles's Court it was acknowledged that, in the long run, the contest which had been provoked would be beyond the strength of England. But there were those who thought, and Buckingham was doubtless one of the number, that the English superiority at sea was so manifest that it would be possible to re-establish the independence of Rochelle and to drive the French commerce from the seas, before either France or Spain would be strong enough to make resistance.[1]

Was it certain, however, that even this temporary superiority at sea would be maintained. Again and again during the autumn and winter mobs of sailors had broken away from discipline and had flocked up to London to demand their pay by battering at the doors of the Lord Admiral or the Treasurer of the Navy. And now Pennington's crews were breaking out into open mutiny. The three months for which the City fleet had been lent were nearly at an end, and when orders were given to weigh anchor and to make sail for the westward, the men responded with shouts of 'Home! home!' and refused to touch a rope unless

Mutiny in Pennington's fleet.

[1] This is the substance of an undated paper amongst the *State Papers, France*, which seems to come from some one of authority.

CHAP. XIV.

1627.

they were assured that they would be allowed to return to the Downs.[1]

Jan. Commission of enquiry into the state of the Navy.

After the return of Willoughby's fleet, the state of the Navy had at last compelled Charles to order a special commission of enquiry, and the defects of the King's ships were being daily dragged to light. The workmen at Chatham, the Commissioners discovered, had not received their wages for a year. The sailors on board some of the ships were in the greatest distress. They had neither clothes on their backs nor shoes on their feet, and they had no credit on shore to supply these deficiencies.[2]

Yet, in spite of all this, orders were given to prepare a great fleet of eighty ships for the summer. French prizes were now beginning to come in, and would doubtless meet part of the expense. The revenue had been anticipated to the amount of 236,000*l.*[3] The utmost economy was practised in the Royal household. If only the loan could be collected, all might yet be well for a season.

Progress of the loan.

In January the Privy Councillors and other persons of note appointed to act as Commissioners for the loan started for the counties assigned to them. It was thought that men who had closed their purses tightly in the presence of the local Commissioners would be chary of offering a refusal to the Lords of the Council. And, in the majority of cases, the effect produced was doubtless great. Of the reports sent up in the first three months of the new year, the greater part of those preserved must have been tolerably satisfactory to the King. Berkshire made but little difficulty. The University and city of Oxford showed alacrity in the

[1] Philpot to Buckingham, Jan. 15; *S. P. Dom.*, xlix. 32.
[2] Order of the Commissioners, Jan. 16; *S. P. Dom.*, xlix. 68.
[3] *S. P. Dom.*, xlvii. 55.

business. In Cheshire there was ready obedience.[1] In Somerset, Hereford, Shropshire, Stafford, Durham, all but a small number were ready to pay.[2] Nor does this afford matter for surprise. The immediate risk was great. The refuser might be cast into prison, or sent to be knocked on the head in some chance skirmish in the German wars. Except for the most resolute and self-sacrificing, the temptation to escape the danger by the payment of a few shillings, or even a few pounds, was too strong to be resisted. Yet small as the number of refusers was, the Government could not afford to pass lightly over their denial. It represented a vast amount of suppressed discontent, and the men from whom it proceeded were often in the enjoyment of high personal consideration in their respective neighbourhoods. In some counties their example spread widely amongst all classes. In Essex some of the Commissioners themselves refused to pay.[3] In Northamptonshire twenty-two of the principal gentry, followed by more than half the county, offered so decided a resistance that the itinerant Privy Councillors at once bound over the gentlemen to appear before the Board at Whitehall, and sent up a number of the refractory persons of lesser quality to be mustered for service under the King of Denmark.[4] In Gloucestershire twelve out of twenty-five Commissioners refused to pay, and the example thus given was widely followed.[5] In Lincolnshire, at the end of January, only two or three persons had given their consent.[6]

Growing resistance.

[1] *S. P. Dom.*, xlix. 12, 36; lvi. 72.

[2] *Ibid.*, liii. 88, liv. 28, lvi. 89, lix. 6.

[3] *Ibid.*, iv. 47.

[4] Manchester, Exeter, and Coke to Buckingham, Jan. 12.

[5] Northampton and Bridgeman to the Council, Feb. 17; *ibid.*, xlix. 8, liv. 28.

[6] *Contarini's Despatch*, Feb. $\frac{2}{12}$. — to Mead, Feb. 2; *Court and Times*, i. 191. The story of the riot and attack on the house in which

CHAP. XIV.

1627. Feb.

The Council was in no great hurry to proceed to strong measures. Most of the members were absent from London as Commissioners, and during the greater part of February some twenty gentlemen were allowed to remain in confinement without receiving any summons to appear before the Board. When no signs of submission appeared they were called up and commanded to obey the King. But the threat produced no impression on them. The flower of the English gentry refused to admit the justice of the demand, and every one of them was sent back to the restraint from which he had come.

The battle once engaged had to be fought out to the end. It would never do to accept payment from the weak and to allow the strong to go free. A fresh attempt to overcome the opposition in Lincolnshire ended somewhat better than the former one. Still there were sixty-eight recusants. Ten of them were Commissioners, and were sent up to answer for their refusal before the Council. Others followed not long afterwards. The Earl of Lincoln was detected in agitating against the loan, and was sent to the Tower.[1]

March. The Earl of Lincoln sent to the Tower.

Feb. Resistance of the poorer classes.

The spirit of resistance was contagious. On Feb. 28 orders were given by the Council to press fifty of the Essex refusers for the King of Denmark. But the poorer classes were learning from the example of the gentry to stand upon their rights. With one consent these men refused to take the press money, the reception of which would consign them to bondage. On March 16 there was a long debate on their case in the Privy Council, and some of its members, with more

March.

the Commissioners were is contradicted by Mead on the evidence of a Lincolnshire gentleman. The rumours of the day contained in this correspondence must be received with great caution.

[1] *S. P. Dom.*, lvi. 39. Mead to Stuteville, March 17; *Court and Times*, i. 207.

zeal than knowledge, recommended that they should be hung under the authority of martial law. Coventry was too good a lawyer to admit this doctrine. Martial law, he explained, was applicable to soldiers only, and men who had not yet received the press money were not soldiers. The order given for pressing these bold men of Essex was accordingly rescinded, and they were left to be dealt with, if they could be dealt with at all, in some other way.[1]

The names of these obscure men have been long ago forgotten. But that men of no great repute should have been found on the list of those who were willing to suffer persecution for their rights as Englishmen is a thing not to be forgotten. It was the surest warrant that the resistance, though led by an aristocracy, was no merely aristocratic uprising. The cause concerned rich and poor alike, and rich and poor stepped forward to suffer for it and to maintain their rights each in their own way. The day would come, if they were pressed hard, when they would step forward to fight for it.

Hampden, Eliot, and Wentworth.

Amongst the names better known to the England of that day are to be found three which will never be forgotten as long as the English tongue remains the language of civilised men. John Hampden, the young Buckinghamshire squire, known as yet merely as a diligent Member of Parliament, active in preparing the case against Buckingham in the last session,[2] but taking no part in the public debates, was amongst the foremost on the beadroll of honour to be called up to London on January 29 to answer for his refusal to pay the

[1] Mead to Stuteville, March 17, 24; *Court and Times*, i. 207, 208. This hearsay evidence is corroborated by the order in the *Council Register*, March 19, for rescinding the directions for the press.

[2] Forster, *Eliot*, i. 290.

CHAP. XIV.

1627. March.

loan. Eliot's summons in May and his subsequent imprisonment need no explanation. And with Hampden and Eliot and many another whose names are only less honoured than theirs, was Sir Thomas Wentworth.

Wentworth's opposition.

If Wentworth had good reasons for opposing the free gift, he had still better reasons for opposing the forced loan. Scarcely a shred was left of that freedom of choice which, at least in appearance, accompanied the former demand. An attempt to draw money illegally from Wentworth's purse was an insult which he would have been inclined to resent even if Charles had intended to employ it for purposes of which he approved. But the loan was to be employed for purposes of which he entirely disapproved. To talk to him about the patriotism of lending money for a war with Spain, and, for all he knew, for a war with France too, was adding mockery to the insult. What he wanted was to see the Crown and Parliament turning their attention to domestic improvement. And instead of that, Charles and Buckingham were ruining the sources of their influence by forcing the nation to support unwillingly an extravagant and ill-conducted war.

That the forced loan was not a loan in any true sense it was impossible to deny. There was no reasonable prospect of its repayment, and money thus given was a subsidy in all but name. That Parliament alone could grant a subsidy was a doctrine which no Englishman would be likely directly to deny, and which few Englishmen not living under the immediate shadow of the Court would be likely even indirectly to deny.

Wentworth, however, as usual contented himself with passive opposition. His old rival, Sir John Savile, threw himself into the vacancy which Wentworth had made, and was able to report in April that the success of the loan in Yorkshire was entirely owing to his

The forced loan in Yorkshire.

CHAP. XIV.

exertions.[1] For the present Wentworth was suffered to stand aloof, taking his ease at his ancestral manor of Wentworth Woodhouse. At last, as the summer wore on, he was summoned before the Council, answered courteously but firmly that he would not lend, and was placed under restraint. Before the end of June he was sent into confinement in Kent. The last resource of the King was to banish the leading opposers of the loan to counties as far away as possible from their own homes.[2]

1627. March.

At Court the views which prevailed on the subject of the war with France were diametrically opposed to those which commended themselves to Wentworth. Charles did not indeed either abandon his wish to recover the Palatinate or conceal from himself the hindrance which a French war would be to the accomplishment of that design. But he was deeply persuaded that, whatever the consequences might be, he could not act otherwise than he had done. His explanation of the whole matter was very simple. Richelieu had at first meant well. But he was a priest after all. He had been bribed by the Court of Rome with the offer of the high position of Papal Legate in France, to set his whole mind upon the extirpation of the Huguenots.

Jan. Charles's opinion of the war with France.

Believes Richelieu to be bought by the Pope,

If such an estimate of Richelieu's character strikes those who hear of it at the present day as too monstrous to have been seriously entertained, it must not be forgotten that good judges of character are rare, and that Charles had neither the materials before him which are in our days accessible in profusion, nor the dispassionate judgment which would have enabled

and himself to have been always right.

[1] Savile to Buckingham, April 4, 1627; *S. P. Dom.*, lix. 35.

[2] *Council Register*, June 16, 20, 27, 29. Manchester to the King, July 5; *S. P. Dom.*, lxx. 32.

CHAP. XIV. 1627. Jan.

him to extract the truth from what materials he had. On one point he was quite clear. He himself had been always in the right. The treaty between France and England had been directly violated by the seizures of English ships and goods in France.. What had been done in England had been a necessity of State policy. The Queen's household had intrigued with the English Catholics and had sown distrust between the King and his wife. Bassompierre had set matters straight, but had been disavowed through private passion.[1]

Has no doubt of his strength.

If Charles and his ministers misunderstood the motives and underrated the difficulties of the great statesman with whom they had to do, they were equally blind to the secret of his power. They watched the struggles of the inhabitants of Rochelle, and they fancied that strength was there. They watched the seething discontent of the French aristocracy, and they fancied that strength was there. They thought that if they struck hard enough the overthrow of the Cardinal would be the work of a few months. They did not see that they were aiming, not at the abasement of a minister but at the disintegration of a nation, and that the effective strength of the nation would fly in the face of the audacious foreigners who had based their calculations on its divisions.

March. Pennington attacks the French shipping.

In one point Charles was not deceived. The French had nothing afloat which could look the English Navy in the face. In March Pennington was let loose upon the French shipping,[2] and English cruisers swept the seas from Calais to Bordeaux. The goods on board

[1] This is the main result of the language used by Holland to Contarini in giving account of the opinion prevailing at Court. *Contarini's Despatch*, $\frac{\text{Jan. 26}}{\text{Feb. 5}}$.

[2] Instructions to Pennington, March 3, 11, 12; *S. P. Dom.*, lvi. 18, 85, 90.

CHAP. XIV.

1627. March.

the prizes were sold without delay. The effect was instantaneous. In the winter sailors and soldiers alike had been on the verge of mutiny. Rioters had thronged the streets of London, crying out upon the Duke for the pay of which they had been defrauded. Before the summer came the preparations for the great expedition were going gaily forward. There was money in hand to pay the men for a time, and to buy provisions. France, it seemed, would provide the means for its own ruin.

Feb. Buckingham's overtures to Spain.

Buckingham was this time to go himself in command. With the prospect of increased responsibility, even he looked uneasily at the enormous forces of the two great monarchies which he and his master had provoked. He determined to make overtures to Spain.

The proposal was not to be made through any accredited agent of the Crown. In proportion as the policy of the English Government came to revolve round the favourite minister, there sprung up a new swarm of courtier-like diplomatists, whose chief qualification for employment was to be found in their dependence on the great Duke. Such a one was Edward Clerke, who had been employed on many a delicate mission by Buckingham, and who had been reprimanded by the Commons at Oxford on account of the indecent warmth with which he defended his patron.

Gerbier and Rubens.

Such a one was Balthazar Gerbier, architect and connoisseur, born in Zealand of French refugee parents,[1] and settled in England, a man at home in every nation and specially attached to none. In 1625 he had accompanied Buckingham to Paris, and had there met Rubens, who was engaged to paint Buckingham's portrait, and who coveted the distinction of a diplomatist

[1] Sainsbury, *Papers relating to Rubens*, 316.

CHAP. XIV.

1625. May. as well as that of a painter. He talked fluently of the advantages to England of peace with Spain. But as yet the tongue of the great artist had no charm for Buckingham. The Cadiz expedition, with all its expected triumphs, was still before him.

1627. Jan. In January, 1627, Gerbier was again in Paris, where he seems again to have met Rubens, who held much the same language as he had done two years before.[1] Buckingham, when he heard what had been said, resolved to avail himself of the opportunity offered to him. But to do Buckingham justice, when he now sent Gerbier to Brussels to take up the broken thread of these conversations, it was no cowardly desertion of his allies which he was planning. Just as when he made war with Spain he was sanguine enough to suppose that he would get everything he wanted by striking hard, so now that he was ready to make peace, he was sanguine enough to expect to get everything he wanted for the mere asking. Gerbier was nominally to enter into negotiations for the purchase of a collection of pictures and antiques, but in reality to propose that a suspension of arms should be agreed on with a view to peace. This suspension of arms was to include the Dutch Republic and the King of Denmark.

Feb. Buckingham hopes to gain everything from Spain.

Gerbier's proposals.

Such a proposal was doomed to rejection unless Charles was ready to abandon the Dutch. With them Spain would make neither truce nor peace unless they would open the Scheldt, and tacitly abandon their claim to independence.[2] Rubens of course, by the direction of the Infanta Isabella, replied courteously to Gerbier. But he assured him, with

Answer of Rubens.

[1] That the overture came from Rubens was afterwards stated by Buckingham, and is implied in an undated letter from Gerbier to Rubens in the Archives at Brussels.

[2] The Infanta Isabella to Philip IV., Feb. $\frac{18}{28}$. *Brussels MSS.*

1627. Feb.

truth,[1] that the King of Spain had no longer any great influence in Germany, and could do nothing in a hurry about the King of Denmark. There would be a difficulty, too, about the Dutch, who insisted upon receiving the title of independent States. The best thing would be to treat for a separate peace between Spain and England. If Charles, in short, would throw over his allies he would then see what Spain would think fit to do for him.[2] But the claims put forward by Spain were out of all proportion to its strength. The siege of Breda had completely exhausted the treasury. Never, wrote the Infanta, had she been in such straits for money. If the enemy took the field she saw no means to resist him.[3]

Gerbier returns to London.

Before the end of February Gerbier was in London, telling his story to Buckingham. Baltimore, the Calvert of earlier days, was for the first time since his dismissal from office summoned to consultation with the favourite. But Buckingham would not see that it was madness to expect to impose such a peace as he designed at a time when England had ceased to have any terrors for Spain. He sent Carleton to acquaint the Dutch ambassador, Joachimi, with all that had passed. Joachimi was to be asked to consult the States General, assuring them that nothing would be done without their consent.

Joachimi informed.

Joachimi was frightened. He could not understand how Buckingham could seriously expect, under the circumstances, to bring about a general pacification in Germany and the Netherlands, and he not unnaturally fancied that the proposal made to him was only the prelude to a separate peace between England and Spain.

[1] The Infanta's correspondence in the previous year, 1626, is full of accounts of an abortive attempt at an alliance with the Emperor.

[2] *Sainsbury*, 68–76.

[3] The Infanta Isabella to Philip IV. March $\frac{10}{20}$. *Brussels MSS.*

CHAP. XIV.

1627. Feb.

He was the more uneasy as Charles was absent at Newmarket, and he supposed, whether correctly or not cannot now be known, that Charles was to be kept in ignorance till it was too late for him to remonstrate. His suspicions were increased when he learned that Conway knew nothing about the matter, and that when that usually submissive Secretary was informed of what was passing, he burst out into angry talk, and actually called his 'most excellent patron' a Judas.

Feb. 28. The King committed.

What Buckingham might have been induced to do, it is impossible to say. Most probably he had as yet no fixed design. At all events, if he had meant to keep the secret from Charles, he was now obliged to abandon the idea. Taking Baltimore with him, he went to Newmarket, and invited all the Privy Councillors on the spot to discuss the matter in the King's presence. Their opinions were not favourable to the chances of the negotiation. Charles himself, though he would not refuse to listen to anything that the Spaniards might have further to say, positively declined to abandon either his brother-in-law or the States General. It was finally arranged that Carleton should go as ambassador to the Hague, upon a special mission for which it was easy to find an excuse. In reality he was to take the opportunity of persuading the Dutch to accept any reasonable offers of peace which might reach him from Brussels, and Gerbier was directed to inform Rubens that England would not treat separately from the States General. The pacification of Germany might, however, be left to a separate negotiation.[1]

Terms on which the negotiation is to proceed.

Agreement between France and Spain.

Whilst the Spanish Government was amusing England with negotiations which it had no expectation of

[1] Joachimi to the States General, March $\frac{3}{13}$, $\frac{9}{19}$; *Add. MSS.*, 17,677, M, fol. 43, 48. *Contarini's Despatches*, $\frac{\text{Feb. } 27}{\text{March } 9}$, March $\frac{9}{19}$. *Sainsbury*, 76–80.

CHAP. XIV.

1627. Feb.

being able to bring to a conclusion satisfactory to itself,[1] Olivares was making use of Buckingham's overtures in another direction. He showed his letters from Brussels to the French ambassador at Madrid, and, by holding up before his eyes the unwelcome prospect of peace between Spain and England, frightened him into signing an engagement between France and Spain for common action against England, March 16. and the engagement was at once ratified in Paris.[2] It was so clearly against the political interests of Spain to support the growing power of France, that it has generally been supposed that the Spanish Government April 10. had no intention of fulfilling its promises. But it has been forgotten that at Madrid religious took precedence of political considerations. The letters written by Philip IV. at the time, leave no doubt that he contemplated with delight the renewal of an alliance with a Catholic country, and that if he afterwards failed to assist Lewis in his hour of danger, it was his poverty rather than his will that was at fault.[3]

The war in Germany.

Between Charles and Buckingham there was much in common. Both were ever sanguine of success, and inclined to overlook the difficulties in their path. But whilst Buckingham was apt to fancy that he could create means to accomplish his ends, Charles was apt to fancy that he could accomplish his ends without creating means at all. In the midst of his preparations for war with France, he still thought it possible to intervene with effect in Germany, and indeed in the spring of 1627 there was just a chance of retrieving Christian's defeat at Lutter if Charles could have given

[1] Philip IV. to the Infanta Isabella $\frac{\text{May } 22}{\text{June } 1}$. *Brussels MSS.*

[2] Philip IV. to the Infanta Isabella, April $\frac{1}{11}$, $\frac{\text{May } 23}{\text{June } 1}$. Philip IV. to Mirabel $\frac{\text{May } 22}{\text{June } 1}$. *Brussels MSS.*

[3] Richelieu, *Mem.*, iii. 282; Siri, *Mem. Rec.*, vi. 257.

CHAP. XIV. 1627. Feb.

efficient support to his uncle. But with the merely nominal support which he was now able to give, there was scarcely any chance at all.

The only bright spot in Christian's situation was that for a time he had to contend with Tilly alone. Wallenstein was away in Hungary keeping Mansfeld and Bethlen Gabor at bay. But before the summer was over he reduced Bethlen Gabor to sue for peace. Mansfeld, hopeless of success, directed his course towards Venice, and died on the way. Wallenstein, relieved of danger, was thus enabled to bring back his troops to North Germany before the summer was over. Yet, if Charles had been an ally worth having at all, he would by that time have enabled Christian to strike a blow which might have changed the whole complexion of affairs.

Wallenstein in Hungary.

Charles had at his disposal only the four regiments which had been sent to defend the Netherlands in 1624. Their term of service was now expired. But the offer to place them at the King of Denmark's service sounded like a mockery to Christian. He calculated that, by the treaty of the Hague, 600,000*l.* was now due to him from England, and Charles, who had no money to spare, offered to send him jewels instead. There was no demand for jewels in Denmark, and Christian complained bitterly. "Let God and the world," he said, "judge whether this be answerable or Christianlike dealing."[1] Even the four regiments were not what they ought to have been. They should have numbered 6,000 men, but their commander, Sir Charles Morgan, reported in April that when the men were mustered to go on board ship at Enkhuisen, only 2,472 answered to their names.[2] The others had fallen a prey to the

The four regiments for Denmark.

April 7.

[1] Statement by the King of Denmark, Feb. 26; *S. P. Denmark.*

[2] Morgan to Carleton, March 27; Memorial, April 7; *S. P. Denmark.*

general disorganisation of the English administration. The pay had come in slowly. Many of the officers knew nothing of military service, and were living in England whilst the soldiers were left to their own devices in the Netherlands.

They sail for the Elbe.

Such as they were, the skeletons of the four regiments were shipped for the Elbe. From time to time recruits were sent from England to fill up their numbers. Men pressed against their will, and men sent abroad because they had refused to pay the loan, were expected to hold head against Tilly's triumphant veterans. With all the efforts of the English Government the numbers never reached their full complement. On the 1st of June Morgan had not quite 5,000 under his command. But disease and desertion soon thinned the ranks, and it was found impossible to keep up even that number. A jewel which Charles sent proved entirely useless. It was valued at 100,000*l.*, but no one in Denmark would advance such a sum upon it.[1]

To fight in Germany still formed part of the plan of the English King. But his heart—and, what was of still greater importance, the heart of the favourite—was now elsewhere. Charles was deeply wounded by the refusal of the King of France to agree to Bassompierre's plan for his household arrangements, and by Richelieu's evident intention to make France powerful by sea. And he fell into the mistake into which others have fallen before and after him, of fancying that any weapon was good enough to be used against a hostile Government, and that if he could raise a sufficient number of adversaries against Richelieu it would be unnecessary for him to enquire what cause they represented or what moral weight they possessed.

[1] Anstruther to Conway, June 16; *S. P. Denmark.*

CHAP. XIV.

1627.

Montague's mission.

That the French aristocracy were highly discontented with Richelieu was no secret to any one, and Charles and Buckingham determined to send an agent to fan the flame of their discontent. Walter Montague, the younger son of the Earl of Manchester, one of those sprightly young men who sunned themselves in the light of Buckingham's favour, was selected for the mission. In Lorraine it was expected that he would find the Duchess of Chevreuse, whose bright eyes and witty tongue were inspired by a genius for political intrigue, and who had been exiled from France in consequence of the part which she had taken against the Cardinal. She had been a partisan of the English alliance from the beginning, and it is believed that in 1624 she counted the English ambassador Holland amongst her numerous lovers. Buckingham now hoped that she would allure the Duke of Lorraine to attack France from the east, whilst the communications which she still kept up with her friends at home would be of service in preparing trouble for the French Government nearer Paris. Still greater hopes were founded on the Court of Turin. The restless Charles Emmanuel, who had spent his youth in attacking France and his middle age in attacking Spain, was now believed to be willing to turn his arms once more against his first enemy. With him was the Count of Soissons, a French Prince of the blood, who disliked the government of the Cardinal, and was pressing for a Savoyard force to enable him to invade his native country.

Such were the allies with whose help Buckingham hoped to effect a diversion for his great enterprise. But the great enterprise had something in it of a loftier strain. Cool reason may suggest that the continued independence of the French Protestants was in the long run an evil omen for those who were most interested

in it, but the dangers attending upon complete submission to a Catholic Government were so patent that wiser men than Buckingham might easily have become enthusiastic in the defence of Rochelle. Nor was resistance to be confined to Rochelle alone. The Duke of Rohan, whose authority was great in the south of France, was to raise the Protestants of Languedoc, and to welcome Soissons on the one hand, whilst he gave his support to the Rochellese with the other.[1]

May. Preparations in England.

All through the spring preparations were going on in England. In the beginning of May the new levies which were to make up the wrecks of the Cadiz regiments to 8,000 men were beginning to gather round Portsmouth, but the reports which were sent to the Government were not encouraging. Of 200 furnished by the county of Hants, 120 were 'such base rogues' that it was useless to keep them. No money had been sent down to meet the wants of those who were to remain.[2] The troops gathered at Southampton and Winchester were ready to mutiny for want of pay.[3] The Deputy Lieutenants, whose duty it was to collect the men and send them forward, were hard put to it to satisfy the King and their neighbours too. In Dorsetshire the Isle of Purbeck refused to send men at all, and the officials who had advanced the money required for the clothing and support of the levies on the march to Portsmouth complained that the county had refused a rate for the purpose, and that they had heard nothing of any order from the Lord Treasurer for their repayment.[4] A few days later came

[1] Buckingham's plans from time to time may be gathered far best from Contarini's despatches.

[2] Blundell to Buckingham, May 1; *S. P. Dom.*, lxxii. 6.

[3] Mason to Nicholas, May 7; *ibid.*, lxii. 70.

[4] Deputy Lieutenants of Dorsetshire to the Council, May 30, June 8 *ibid.*, lxv. 19, lxvi. 41.

CHAP. XIV.

1627. June.

a fresh order for 150 more men. The men were found, but they had been sent away amidst the tears and cries of their wives and children. On June 3, Sir John Burgh, the old soldier who was going as second in command of the expedition, wrote that the surgeon's chests were still unfurnished. Warrant had been given for the money, but it was not paid nor likely to be. If men were expected to fight, care must be had in preserving them when they were hurt. Shirts, shoes, and stockings too were wanting, and the arms had not yet arrived. Yet he hoped that when 'armed and clothed, the men would be fit to be employed.'[1]

June 11. The King at Portsmouth.

In spite of every drawback, the armament, with the help of the French prize-money, was approaching completion. The King went down to Portsmouth to see the fleet, dined on board the Admiral's ship, and talked merrily about the prospects of the voyage.[2] The Duke followed soon afterwards, boasting as he went of what he would do to re-establish the reputation of the English Navy, which had been tarnished by the failure at Cadiz and by Willoughby's disaster.[3]

June 19. Buckingham's instructions.

The instructions issued to Buckingham were dated on the 19th of June.[4] The view which Charles took of his relations to the French Government was very much the same as that which he had taken of his relations to the House of Commons. Both had urged him to war with Spain. Both, for their own objects, had basely deserted him. As Seymour, Phelips, and Eliot wished to make themselves masters of England, Richelieu wished to make himself master of the sea. Charles was therefore only acting in self-defence. "Our nearest

[1] Burgh to Buckingham, June 3; *ibid.*, lxvi. 19.
[2] Mason to Nicholas, June 11; *ibid.*, lxvi. 67.
[3] *Contarini's Despatch*, June $\frac{19}{29}$.
[4] Instructions to Buckingham, June 19; *S. P. Dom.*, lxvii. 57.

allies," he maintained, "even those who have counselled us to the same war, have taken advantage to encroach upon our rights, to ruin our friends, and to root out that religion whereof by just title we are the defender. Our resolution therefore is, under the shield of God's favour, to prosecute our just defence." Buckingham was therefore to consider as his first business how to suppress all attempts on the part of Spain or France to interfere with English commerce and to destroy or capture the ships of either nation. Secondly, he was to conduct to Rochelle certain regiments which were needed by the French Protestants in consequence of the refusal of Lewis to carry out the stipulations of the treaty of the preceding year. He was to explain to the Rochellese that there was no intention of raising a rebellion in France on any pretence of English interests, but that he was come on hearing that they were shortly to be besieged in defiance of the treaty, for the maintenance of which the King of England's honour had been engaged. He was then to ask them if they still required assistance, and were willing to enter into mutual engagements with England. If the answer was 'negative or doubtful,' all the land soldiers not needed for other purposes were to be sent back to England. If the answer was in the affirmative, the troops were to be handed over to Soubise, who was to accompany the expedition. Buckingham was then to recover the English vessels detained at Bordeaux, and, having made good his claim to the mastery of the sea on the coast of France, was to pass on to break up the trade between Spain and the West Indies and between Spain and Flanders. After scouring the coasts of Spain and Portugal, he was, if he thought fit, to despatch divisions of his fleet to

CHAP. XIV.

1627. June.

the Mediterranean, to the Azores, and even to Newfoundland, in search of French or Spanish prizes.

Such were the instructions, drawn up doubtless with Buckingham's full concurrence, under which the fleet was to sail. In them the aid to Rochelle is mentioned almost in an apologetic manner, as if it were only secondary to the greater object of maintaining the dominion of the seas. It may be that doubts were already entertained at the English Court of the extent to which any meddling with the French national feeling was likely to find favour in France. For it was already rumoured in London that not a few amongst the Huguenot population of the South were unwilling to join a foreign invader against their own sovereign, and that doubts had been expressed even in Rochelle itself of the feasibility of resisting the forces opposed to the city with the aid of such help as Buckingham, variable and inconstant as he was, was likely to bring to their succour.[1]

Sailing of the fleet.

On June 27 the fleet, numbering some hundred sail, and carrying 6,000 foot and 100 horse,[2] left Stokes Bay with a favourable wind. Except a few Dunkirkers, who made all haste to escape, Buckingham saw nothing of any enemy. The first part of the Admiral's instructions, which enjoined upon him the duty of sweeping the Spaniards and French from the seas, could not be fulfilled because Spaniards and French alike kept carefully within their ports. A poetaster of the day seized the glorious opportunity of declaring that King Charles was superior to Edward III. or Elizabeth. Whilst they had only conquered their enemies, he found no enemy willing to meet him.[3]

[1] *Contarini's Despatch*, May $\frac{10}{20}$.

[2] *Herbert* (Philobiblon Society's edition), 46. The common soldiers embarked were 5,934. *S. P. Dom.*, lxxxii. 431.

[3] M. May (*S. P. Dom.*, lxviii. 74) made Neptune address the King thus:—

CHAP. XIV.

1627.

On the evening of July 10, Buckingham cast anchor off St. Martin's, the principal town of the Isle of Rhé, lying on the shore towards the mainland, and guarded by the new fort which had been recently erected, and which, with the smaller fort of La Prée and Fort Louis on the mainland, served to hold in check the commerce of Rochelle. The next day was spent in collecting the fleet as it came in, and in battering La Prée. On the morning of the 12th a council of war was held. Sir William Becher, accompanied by Soubise and an agent of Rohan, was to go to Rochelle to discover whether the citizens would accept the hand held out to them. The English troops were to be landed at once upon the island.

July 10. Buckingham at Rhé.

July 11.

July 12.

There were reasons apart from the decision of the Rochellese which made Buckingham anxious to place himself in possession of Rhé. If only it could be brought into English hands it would be a thorn in the side of the rising French commerce. Its ports within the still waters of the strait which divided it from the mainland would be an admirable gathering place for English privateers, whilst its situation in the close neighbourhood of the Protestant populations of Southern France would open the door to a skilful use of religious and political intrigue. Its salt marshes too, which were in high repute all over Europe, would offer a valuable source of revenue to the English exchequer.

In the afternoon the preparations for landing near the eastern point of the island were completed. Buck-

July 12. The landing.

"I saw third Edward stain my flood
By Sluys with slaughtered Frenchmen's blood:
And from Eliza's fleet
I saw the vanquished Spaniards fly.
But 'twas a greater mastery,
No foe at all to meet;
When they, without their ruin or dispute,
Confess thy reign as sweet as absolute."

CHAP. XIV.

1627. July 12.

ingham, on his first day of actual warfare, showed no lack of spirit or intelligence. He was to be found everywhere, listening to information and urging on the men. When the troops descended into the boats it was evident that opposition would be offered. Toiras, the Governor of St. Martin's, the commander who had insidiously broken peace with Rochelle two years before, had collected a force of some 1,200[1] foot and 200 horse to dispute the landing of the English. Covered by the fire of the ships the boats put off. The great evil of the English army was at once made manifest. There was no cohesion amongst the men, no tradition of customary discipline. There were some who hastened to take up their place in rank as good soldiers should. There were others, and that too not merely raw recruits, who, weary with the long voyage, lingered on shipboard and turned a deaf ear to the orders of their commanders, or who, even when they reached the shore, hung about the water's edge dabbling their hands in the waves. Among this helpless mass Buckingham, cudgel in hand, went to and fro, 'beating some and threatening others.' When two regiments were on shore, he had to throw himself into a boat and go back to do the like on shipboard. Sir William Courtney's regiment had refused to leave their safe position in the vessels, and without the personal presence of the Duke nothing could be done.[2]

Toiras saw his opportunity. The French horse charged down upon the disordered clusters, and drove

[1] The numbers vary in different accounts from one to more than two thousand.

[2] The account of the early history of the expedition is taken from Graham's journal (*S. P. Dom.*, lxxi. 65) compared with another journal (*ibid.*, lxxi. 60), and the printed books of Herbert (*The Expedition to the Isle of Rhé*), Philobiblon Society's edition; Isnard (*Arcis Sammartinianæ Obsidio*); *Le Mercure François*, tom. 13, &c.

them headlong into the sea. Many a brave man, carried away by the rush, perished in the waters. But the two colonels, Sir John Burgh and Sir Alexander Brett, did their duty well. Buckingham, perceiving what had happened, hurried back to the post of danger. At last a line was formed, and before the French infantry had time to come up, the horsemen, leaving on the ground nearly half their number, many of them bearing some of the noblest names in France, drew off from the unequal combat. But it was thought in the English ranks that, if the enemy's foot had hastened up, the day must have gone otherwise than it did.

The march towards St. Martin's.

Of personal bravery Buckingham had shown that he possessed his full share, and in his march towards St. Martin's he gave proof of consideration for the needs and feelings of others which is no slight element of success. He refused a large sum of money offered him for the ransom of the bodies of the slain Frenchmen, and allowed them to be taken freely away by their friends for burial. He tended his wounded enemies as if they had been his own personal friends. Not content with issuing the usual orders against pillage, he directed that none of his soldiers should even enter a village, and he himself set an example to men less delicately nurtured than himself, by sleeping under a cloak in the open fields. He neglected nothing which would conduce to the comfort of his men. With his own eyes he took care to see that the provisions were landed in due time, and on one occasion he risked his life to save a poor wretch who had been left on a sandbank surrounded by the rising tide.

If only military and political capacity had been granted to Buckingham, he might well have become the idol of his soldiers. But already the unstable foundations on which his enterprise was raised were

CHAP. XIV.

1627. July. Answer from Rochelle.

beginning to make themselves manifest. Before he reached St. Martin's he knew that the Rochellese, instead of springing into his arms at a word, were doubtful and hesitating. Soubise thought that they were like slaves too long held in captivity to venture to claim their freedom. Becher thought that the magistrates had been bribed by the King of France. But whatever the explanation might be, the fact was certain that they would not stir till they had consulted their brother Huguenots in the interior of the country. A miserable handful of eighteen volunteers, gradually swelling to 250 men, was all that Rochelle had to offer to its self-constituted deliverer.[1]

[1] Soubise to Buckingham, July $\frac{12}{22}$ (not $\frac{\text{July } 22}{\text{Aug. } 21}$, as calendared). *Becher's Journal.* Symonds to Nicholas, Aug. 15; *S. P. Dom.*, lxii. 74, lxxii. 22; i. lxxiv. 9. *Mém. de Rohan*, 211.

CHAPTER XV.

THE SIEGE OF ST. MARTIN'S.

ACCORDING to the letter of Buckingham's instructions, he should have turned elsewhere as soon as he found that no real support was to be expected from Rochelle.

But it was one thing to contemplate such a course in England; it was another thing to turn his back upon the enemy in the Isle of Rhé. The siege of St. Martin's must be pushed on.

July 17. St. Martin's besieged.

At first all seemed to promise well. Guns were landed and placed in position, and the English officers hoped to reduce the place in a short time. A fortnight later they were of another mind. The fort was well garrisoned and vigorously defended. The soil around was rocky and ill suited for the operations of a siege. What was worse still, there was no longer any cordial co-operation between Buckingham and his chief officers. Men who had served in the hard school of actual warfare were restless under the command of a novice, and the Duke, with his resolute desire to look into everything with his own eyes, may easily have given offence without any intention of being overbearing to those beneath him. Whilst his own forces were diminishing, the French armies were gathering around. Ships were fitting out along the coast, and a land army, under the Duke of Angoulême, was firmly established in the neighbourhood of Rochelle.

CHAP. XV.

1627. July.

To do him justice, Buckingham saw clearly into the heart of the situation. He knew that his chance of obtaining auxiliaries in France depended entirely upon his success or failure at St. Martin's. If force failed, a blockade must be kept up till the fortress surrendered from sheer starvation. And if this was to be done in the face of the threatened succour from the mainland, reinforcements of every kind must be sent, and that soon.[1]

Aug. The siege turned into a blockade.

By the middle of August the works surrounding the fort had been completed. On the sea side the passage was guarded by the fleet, and a floating boom was thrown around the landing-place to make ingress impossible. In order that hunger might do its work the more speedily the wives and female relations of the soldiers of the garrison were collected from the town on the 11th, and driven towards the fort. They were told that if they returned they would be put to death without mercy. Toiras at first turned a deaf ear to the cries of these miserable creatures. But the English soldiers knew how to appeal to him in a way which he was unable to resist. Again and again they fired into the midst of the shrieking crowd. One at least, a mother with a child at her breast, was killed on the spot. The demands of the fathers, husbands, brothers within could no longer be resisted, and the fort received the helpless fugitives to burden yet more its failing resources.[2] After this barbarity, excused doubtless in the eyes of the English officers as a necessity of

[1] De Vic to Conway, July 27; Buckingham to Conway, July 28; *Hardwicke St. P.*, ii. 23, 27.

[2] *Isnard*, 101. *Herbert* (84) makes light of the whole matter, talks as though the Duke had performed an office of piety in sending the women to their husbands, and suggests that if any were shot it was by the French. But a letter from the camp says coolly: 'Afterwards they were often shot at by our men.' Symonds to Nicholas, Aug. 15; *S. P. Dom.*, lxxiv. 9.

war, there is little satisfaction in reading how the commanders corresponded with one another in terms of high-flown courtesy, how Buckingham sent to Toiras a present of a dozen melons, and how Toiras returned the compliment by sending some bottles of citron-flower water to his assailant.

It was well known in the English camp that the resources of the besieged were limited. But the numbers of the besiegers, too, were wasting away, and it was uncertain whether they would be able to hold out long enough to enforce the hoped-for surrender. Reinforcements were therefore absolutely needed, all the more because there was little prospect of aid from the allies from whom so much had been expected.

Reinforcements needed.

The Duke of Lorraine had listened to Montague, but had done no more. The Duke of Savoy was thinking of designs upon Geneva and Genoa, and wanted the aid of an English army before he would stir. Soissons asked that some strong place, Sedan, Stenay, or Orange, might be given up to him before he would move, and that he might marry a daughter of the titular King of Bohemia with a rich provision from her uncle the King of England. Rohan was agitating the South of France, and promised to take the field in September or October.[1] Whilst the aid upon which Buckingham had counted was not forthcoming, Rochelle promised to be a burden rather than a support. The neutral position which the citizens had taken up was fast becoming untenable. No French commander could endure to leave them unassailed whilst an English army was on the Isle of Rhé. Angoulême accordingly let them know that they must make up their minds. They must be subjects of the King of

[1] Montague's relation, July 5; Instructions to Montague, July 13; *S. P. Savoy.* Rohan to Soubise, $\frac{\text{July } 29}{\text{Aug. } 8}$; *S. P. France.*

CHAP. XV.

1627. Aug.

France or subjects of the King of England. The Rochellese upon this began to draw closer to Buckingham. But they approached him to ask for succour, not to offer him assistance.[1]

Louder and louder grew Buckingham's entreaties for aid from home. Men and provisions were diminishing sadly, and the work was still undone. His own personal risks he could pass over lightly, and he scarcely mentioned the danger which he had run from a French deserter who had attempted to assassinate him. But the army under his command must not be neglected.[2]

A sanguine miscalculation of the state of feeling in France had left Buckingham isolated in the Isle of Rhé. Had he not equally miscalculated the state of feeling at home?

July. The King's eagerness to support the expedition.

Of one thing at least he might be sure. The King would stand by him stoutly. The quarrel with France was as much Charles's as Buckingham's. No sooner therefore had the fleet left Portsmouth than Charles threw himself with unwonted vigour into the conduct of affairs. Up to this time he had been content to leave everything to Buckingham's energetic impulse. If he appeared on rare occasions at the Council table, it was but to give the sanction of his authority to schemes which Buckingham would have to carry into effect. In Buckingham's absence the duty of rousing the sluggish from their apathy and directing the energies of the active devolved upon him alone.

As far as urgency went Charles left little to be desired by his favourite. Marlborough and Weston,

[1] De Vic to Conway, Aug. 14; *Hardw. S. P.*, ii. 35.

[2] Buckingham to Nicholas, Aug. 14 [?]; *Hardw. S. P.*, ii. 34. Buckingham to Becher, Aug. 14; Symonds to Nicholas, Aug. 15. An account of what happened at Rhé, Aug. 15; *S. P. Dom.*, lxxiii. 91, lxxv. 53; i. lxxiv. 9, 10.

CHAP. XV.

1627. July 17.

whose business it was, as Treasurer and Chancellor of the Exchequer, to furnish supplies, were not long in feeling the application of the spur. "I will not think," wrote Charles on July 17, "that now, in my absence, delaying answers will serve me." Ten days later, finding that nothing had been done, he sent Carlisle to see what they were about. "I confess," he complained, "these delays make me impatient even almost beyond patience, if I did not hope that the goodness of your answer should in some measure recompense the slowness of it. One item, and so an end. Let not my monies go wrong ways."[1]

Difficulties of the exchequer.

Such exhortations were of little avail. Charles could call upon others to do the work, but he had no practical suggestion of his own to give. And the position of the exchequer was one in which a single practical suggestion would be worth a whole torrent of exhortations. The great source which had made the fitting out of the expedition possible, the sale of French prize goods, had suddenly dried up. The supremacy of the English at sea was so complete that the enemy's vessels refused to venture from their harbours. The only resource left was the loan money. And since Buckingham's departure the loan money had been gathered in with a more unsparing hand. Many gentlemen in custody were sent into places of confinement in counties as far distant from their own homes as possible, so as to be a standing token of his Majesty's displeasure, and fresh batches of refusers were summoned before the Council.[2] And for the present this rough discipline was successful. A large part of the loan was paid, grudgingly and angrily no doubt, but

[1] The King to Marlborough and Weston, July $\frac{17}{27}$; printed by Mr. Bruce in his *Calendar of State Papers*, Preface, viii.

[2] Holles to Wentworth, Aug. 9; *Strafford Letters*, i. 40.

CHAP. XV. 1627. July.

still it was paid. On July 17, 240,000*l.* had thus come into the exchequer.[1]

It was like pouring water on the sand. The money was paid out as soon as it was paid in. 10,000*l.* a month by estimate, amounting to nearer 12,000*l.* in practice,[2] had to be paid for Sir Charles Morgan's troops in the Danish service, and claims of all kinds arising from the fitting out of the expedition had to be paid by the help of the loan.

Immediately upon the sailing of the fleet the Council came to the conclusion that 2,000 recruits should be levied, and some days later it was agreed to be necessary to spend 12,615*l.* upon provisions for the seamen already at Rhé.[3] But the money was not to be found. Marlborough was too old to take the difficulty very deeply to heart, and took refuge in telling all applicants for payment that their case would be taken into consideration to-morrow.[4] Weston growled over every penny he was called upon to spend, but was powerless to raise supplies from an alienated nation. Ordinary applicants for money due to them were driven to despair. One of them declared that when he waited on the Lord Treasurer he was treated 'like a cur sent by a dog,' and ordered out of the room; when he applied to the Chancellor of the Exchequer he was set upon like a bear tied to the stake.[5] The King could not be treated thus. But if he met with more civil treatment, he did not get more money than his subjects.

Aug. Fresh urgency of the King.

On August 1 he wrote again. Becher had come

[1] Manchester to Conway, July 17; *S. P. Dom.*, lxxi. 25.

[2] Manchester to the King, July 20; *ibid.*, lxxi. 44.

[3] Manchester to the King, June 29; Estimate for victuals, July 5; *ibid.*, lxviii. 28, lxx. 37.

[4] Coke to Conway, June 20; *ibid.*, lxvii. 76.

[5] Belou to Conway, July ? July 30 ?; *ibid.*, lxx. 1, lxxii. 41.

from Rhé to urge on the reinforcements. The Council had at last despatched orders for the levy of the 2,000 men, and there was a talk of finding half the sum needed for the provisions for the sailors.[1] Charles took even this as a promise of better things, and charged his officers to go on in the course they were pursuing. "For if," he wrote, "Buckingham should not now be supplied,. not in show but substantially, having so bravely, and, I thank God, successfully, begun his expedition, it were an irrecoverable shame to me and all this nation; and those that either hinders or, according to their several places, furthers not this action as much as they may, deserves to make their end at Tyburn, or some such place; but I hope better things of you."[2]

Reinforcements promised.

Something at last was to come of all these consultations. The King was able to announce to Buckingham on August 13, that in eight days Becher would sail with provisions and 400 recruits, as well as with 14,000*l.* of ready money. Two thousand men were to follow on September 10. Two thousand more were getting ready in Scotland.[3] Besides this, a fresh force of about the same number was in an advanced state of preparation.

Aug. Progress of the siege.

The King's calculations had outstripped reality. More than three weeks passed before the money was actually provided,[4] and contrary winds prevented Becher from sailing till September 16. He arrived at the Isle of Rhé on the 25th.[5] An Irish regiment had anticipated

[1] Coke to Conway, July 31; *S. P. Dom.*, lxxii. 48.

[2] The King to Marlborough and Weston; *Calendar of Domestic State Papers*, Preface, ix.

[3] The King to Buckingham, Aug. 13; *Hardw. S. P.*, 17, 13.

[4] Long to Nicholas, Aug. 18; *S. P. Dom.*, lxxiv. 40, 74, 81. Conway to Coke, Aug. 22; the King to Marlborough and Weston, Aug. 23.

[5] Becher to Conway, Sept. 27; *ibid.*, xxv. iii. 16. *Hardw. St. P.* ii. 46.

CHAP. XV.

1627. Aug.

him, and had joined the army in the beginning of the month.[1]

When Becher landed matters were looking more hopefully for the besiegers. The recruits had done something towards filling up the gaps in the English ranks. Food was known to be scarce within the citadel, and desertions were becoming numerous. Buckingham, at least, cannot be accused of misunderstanding the requirements of his position. Everything, he knew, depended upon keeping up the strength of the army and stopping the ingress of supplies by sea. He erected a floating battery to watch the sea-face of the fort, and when this was broken down by the violence of the waves he barred the passage with a strong boom which, though it was in its turn snapped by the beating waters, was subsequently replaced by a barrier of hawsers stretched from ship to ship.

Sept. Difficulties of the siege.

These failures increased the gloom which was spreading in the army. Sir John Burgh, Buckingham's second in command, had been killed by a shot. The hot words which had caused a rupture between him and the Duke had been long ago forgiven, and the two had worked together in the face of difficulty. Buckingham did not conceal from himself the extent of the danger. The French army was gathering on the opposite coast, and if it should effect a landing before the fort surrendered, he would hardly be able to meet it. One attempt at negotiation was tried by Buckingham. Sending his kinsman Ashburnham to Paris, on September 4, he made overtures for peace. The suggestion was taken by the French Government as a confession of weakness. Ashburnham was told that as long as an English soldier stood upon French soil, no peace was

[1] Sir E. Conway to Conway, Sept. 4; *Hardw. St. P.*, lxxvi. 26.

CHAP. XV.

1627. Sept.

to be had.[1] Even before this answer reached Buckingham he was crying out for further reinforcements to be sent at all costs.[2] "The army," wrote Sir Edward Conway on September 20 to his father the Secretary, "grows every day weaker; our victuals waste, our purses are empty, ammunition consumes, winter grows, our enemies increase in number and power; we hear nothing from England."[3]

A week later confidence had returned. With the exception of a few boats which had slipped in from time to time, all attempts at victualling St. Martin's had hitherto been baffled. Deserters were thrust back into the fort to increase the number of mouths. On the 25th a request that a gentleman might be sent out 'to treat of a matter of importance,' was refused unless he came to treat for a surrender. All men in the English camp were 'full of hope and confidence.' On the 27th the offer to surrender was actually made. The officers who brought it were to come back in the afternoon to specify the conditions. When the appointed hour arrived, a message was brought asking for a further delay till the next morning.[4] In three days more the provisions of the defenders would be exhausted.[5]

Sept. 27. Proposed surrender of the fort.

Much, however, might be done before the next morning dawned. A flotilla of thirty-five boats had been hindered by contrary winds from attempting to bring relief to the garrison. On the 27th, while Toiras was negotiating, the wind changed and blew strongly from the north-west. The night was dark and

[1] *Isnard*, 135. *Herbert*, i. 19. Richelieu to Lewis XIII., Sept. 20; Richelieu to Toiras, Sept. 22; *Lettres de Richelieu*, ii. 609, 620.

[2] Buckingham to the King, Sept. 19; *Hardw. St. P.*, ii. 45.

[3] Sir E. Conway to Conway, Sept. 20; *S. P. Dom.*, lxxviii. 71.

[4] Becher to Conway, Oct. 3; *Hardw. St. P.*, ii. 48. Isnard (57) spreads the negotiation over the 27th and 28th.

[5] Letter from the French camp, Oct. $\frac{8}{18}$; *S. P. France.*

CHAP. XV. 1627. Sept. 28.

gloomy, and the waves were running high. About three hours after midnight, the Frenchmen, guided by beacon fires within the fort, dashed into the heart of the English fleet. Buckingham, roused by the firing, hurried on board. The combat was carried on almost at hazard in the thick gloom. But at one point the hawsers which defended the passage were severed, and twenty-nine boats laden with supplies succeeded in depositing their precious burden under the walls of the fortress. After morning dawned a fire-ship was sent in after them by the besiegers; but the wind had dropped and the garrison had no difficulty in thrusting off the dangerous assailant. In the afternoon a second fire-ship was let loose with much the same result. Buckingham had all his work to recommence.[1]

The fort supplied.

Sept. 29 Buckingham resolves to stay.

On the 29th a council of war was summoned to consider what was now to be done. The citadel had been furnished with supplies which would last for more than a month. The delay was not a long one. Yet the prospects of the besiegers were not promising. Sickness was making sad havoc in the ranks, and there were only 5,000 men fit for duty. The winter was coming on, and it would be harder than ever to watch the access to the fort; provisions were growing scarce, and as only unground corn had been sent out,[2] whenever the wind lulled the windmills were rendered useless and the men were all but

[1] Becher to Conway, Oct. 3; *Hardw. St. P.*, ii. 48. Symonds to Ashburnham, Oct. 4; *S. P. Dom.* lxxx. 43. Letter from the French camp, Oct. $\frac{8}{18}$; *S. P. France. Herbert*, 145. *Isnard*, 157. I give the number of boats entering from the French letter, which is in accordance with Isnard. The writer had the information from Audoin, who led them in. The English fancied only 14 or 15 had got through. The dates I give from Symonds. Becher gives the 28th wrongly as the day of the offer of surrender.

[2] Like the green coffee afterwards sent to the Crimea.

starved. The French forces on the mainland were gathering thickly, and an attempt to relieve the garrison might be expected at any moment.

On these grounds the council of war unanimously voted for giving up the attempt. Buckingham reluctantly gave his consent, and part of the siege material was carried on board ship. But before long new considerations were presented. Soubise and the Rochellese pleaded hard for delay. Their town was by this time girt about with the entrenchments of the Royal army, and they knew that they must make their choice between submission to their own King and a thorough alliance with England. They offered to find quarters in the city for a thousand sick men, to supply the troops with provisions, and to send boats to assist in guarding the approach to St. Martin's. Nor did the offer of the Rochellese stand alone. Dulbier, Mansfeld's old commissary-general, who was now Buckingham's chief military adviser, brought news from England that the long-wished-for reinforcements would soon be on the way. The Earl of Holland was coming with supplies in men and money which would make the army safe for the winter.[1]

Oct. 3.

The council of war was again summoned on October 3. With only one dissentient voice it retracted its former decision and voted for a continuance of the siege.[2]

Consideration of the question.

The resolution thus taken has been severely criticised. It is possible that the officers may have yielded against their better judgment to Buckingham's urgency.

[1] Becher to Conway, Oct. 3; De Vic to Conway, Oct. 12; *Hardw. S. P.*, ii. 48, 51. *Herbert*, 154.

[2] This, which is distinctly stated in Becher's letter, puts an end to the theory, hitherto, I believe, generally accepted, that Buckingham remained on the island in opposition to the officers. Their vote may have been reluctantly given, but given it undoubtedly was.

CHAP. XV. 1627. Oct.

But even if this were the case it would have been hard to affirm that the military situation was already desperate. October had been marked out for Rohan's rising, and if that rising were to take place, the French commanders, with a fortified city before them, would be in no position to send further aid to St. Martin's. And even if Rohan's rising came to nothing, Holland's reinforcement, if it really arrived, would place any landing of French troops out of the question. The 6,000 foot and 300 horse which the enemy was preparing to throw upon the Isle of Rhé, would indeed have been a formidable diversion to Buckingham's 5,000 soldiers. But they would have been powerless in the face of the 13,000 which the army was expected to number upon Holland's arrival;[1] and, indeed, there is every reason to believe that if the reinforcements had been furnished promptly no attempt would have been made by the French to land troops on the island at all.[2] The only question would then be whether, with greater care and a larger number of ships, it would be possible to frustrate any fresh attempt to revictual the fort.

Rohan's insurrection.

The difficulties before Buckingham, in short, were, in October as they had been in August, rather political than military. Rohan, indeed, kept his word, and before the end of October was at the head of 5,500 men.[3] In his own country, and in the midst of a Protestant population, he could not but meet with some support,

[1] Statement &c., Oct. 19; *S. P. Dom.*, lxxxii. 35.

[2] I say this on the authority of Richelieu himself. "Il faut faire cet effet devant que le secours d'Angleterre arrive, d'autant qu'estant renforcés de trois ou quatre mil hommes, il pourroit arriver que nous ne serions pas en estat de deffaire nos ennemis." *Mémoire*, Sept. $\frac{6}{16}$; *Lettres*, ii. 603. The whole memoir should be read by those who think that Buckingham's failure was a foregone conclusion.

[3] *Mém. de Rohan*, 235.

but there was no general enthusiasm in his cause. Buckingham's theory that Richelieu was bent upon the suppression of Protestantism as a religion, in order to please the Pope, was entirely at variance with fact. The assurances of the French Government that only the political independence of the Protestant towns was at stake, found ready credence.

Disappointed of the support which he had looked for from the French Protestants, Buckingham was equally disappointed in his hopes of a French aristocratic rebellion. Montague had been sent back to Turin, and on October 13 he reported that the Duke of Chevreuse had made up his quarrel with Richelieu, that the Duke of Savoy and the Count of Soissons talked much of an attack upon France, but that they would do nothing till St. Martin's was taken. "Your Majesty's present undertakings," was Montague's conclusion, "grow upon their own roots, and can be nourished by nothing but their own natural heat and vigour."[1]

Oct. 13. Montague again at Turin.

His Majesty's undertakings had, indeed, need of all the heat and vigour obtainable. Before the middle of September it was known that the negotiation carried on by Gerbier and Rubens had broken down utterly.[2] It would be well if Olivares did not send an actual reinforcement to the French army before Rochelle. And while all Charles's attention was directed to the Isle of Rhé, the fortunes of the King of Denmark were crumbling away in North Germany. England had helped him just enough to spur him on to the enterprise, not enough to save him from ruin. Even if Morgan's troops had been duly paid, they formed but a slight instalment of the aid which Charles had promised at the beginning of the war. But in point of fact

Failure of the negotiation with Spain.

Misfortunes of the King of Denmark.

[1] Montague to the King, Oct. 13; *S. P. Savoy.*

[2] Sainsbury, *Rubens*, 85–105.

CHAP. XV.

1627. July. Morgan's regiments.

pay came to the poor men with the greatest irregularity. On July 23 Morgan reported, from his post near Bremen, that his men would probably refuse to fight if the enemy attacked them.[1] Then just as Buckingham was sailing, his confidant, Edward Clerke, was sent to the King of Denmark to assure him that order was taken for the money, and to console him for the past by informing him that the expedition to Rhé had been sent out 'to weaken and divert our joint enemies, that our burden might be easier to our dear uncle.' The uncle must have been possessed of no inconsiderable control over his temper if he did not burst out into angry reproaches when he received the message.[2]

Clerke reached the seat of war with a month's pay just in time to prevent Morgan's regiment from breaking up. But he might as well have left the 1,400 recruits he brought at home. No sooner had they set foot on shore than they deserted in troops of a hundred or two at a time, to hire themselves out to other masters who knew the value of a soldier. The one service which was plainly intolerable to an Englishman, was the service of the King of England. Some of them were recaptured and brought back to their colours, but it was easy to foretell that they would be at best of little use in the field.[3]

Sept. The King of Denmark overpowered.

At last the crisis was come. A peace with Bethlen Gabor had released Wallenstein from Hungary. Crushing the Danish garrisons in Silesia as he passed, he met Tilly at Lauenburg at the end of August. The plan of the joint campaign was soon arranged. Christian, with his finances in disorder and his forces diminished, dared not offer resistance. Only

[1] Morgan to Conway, July 23; *S. P. Denmark.*
[2] Instructions to Clerke, July 27; *S. P. Denmark.*
[3] Clerke to Conway, Aug. 20; *S. P. Denmark.*

CHAP. XV.

1627. Sept.

8,000 men gathered round his standards. Throwing them into garrisons as best he might, he took ship at Glückstadt and fled hurriedly to his islands. On August 28 Wallenstein was marching past Hamburg at the head of 25,000 men. A few days later one of his lieutenants smote heavily upon the Margrave of Baden Heiligenhafen. Excepting three or four fortified towns there was nothing to resist the Imperialists but the ocean.[1]

Misery of Morgan's men.

The remnants of Morgan's men were called across the Elbe. The money brought by Clerke had proved useless. There was some confusion in the accounts, and the merchant who was to pay the bills of exchange refused to do so. Morgan borrowed 3,000 dollars on his own credit. But this would not last long. "What service," he wrote in despair, "can the King expect or draw from these unwilling men? Thus I have been vexed all this summer, and could do nothing but what pleased them. Their officers had little command over them, and by these reasons the King had no great services from us. . . . I could have wished our men had died at the point of the sword, rather than live to see those miseries we are in, and like to be still worse."[2]

Blockade of Hamburg.

It was not Charles's fault that he had war with only half Europe on his hands. "I cannot," he had once said, "defend a bad, nor yield in a good cause." The art of giving up his rights from motives of policy was entirely unknown to him. All through the summer, when it was of the utmost importance to conciliate the Germans of the North, an English fleet, under Sir Sackville Trevor, had been lying off the Elbe and stopping

[1] Anstruther to Conway, Sept. 1; Clerke to Conway, Sept. 7; *S. P. Denmark.*

[2] Morgan to Carleton, Sept. 7; *S. P. Denmark.*

CHAP. XV.

1627. Sept.

the whole commerce of Hamburg by prohibiting trade with France or Spain. At last Trevor was recalled to take measures against a State more powerful than Hamburg. When Carleton was sent to the Hague, he was ordered to watch the progress of some ships which were building in Holland for the French, and to remonstrate with the Dutch on the use which was being made of their harbours. Carleton's remonstrances proving fruitless, Trevor was ordered to sail into the Texel and bring out every French vessel that he could find. On the night of September 27, whilst the French boats were dashing in to relieve St. Martin's, Trevor sailed along the front of the Dutch vessels at anchor. Ranging up unexpectedly alongside of the French ship he poured a broadside into her. She was but half manned, and her captain hastily struck his colours. The next morning, before the Dutch authorities had time to remonstrate, Trevor set sail with his prize to the English coast. But he left Captain Alleyne behind him with orders to look out for other French ships which were known to be fitting out in Holland.[1]

The French ship seized in Holland.

If the Dutch had been as easy to provoke as Charles or Lewis, so flagrant a violation of a neutral harbour might easily have brought on an open rupture. But the Dutch wished merely to draw as much assistance as possible from the rival nations. To please the French they sent a Commission to the Texel to seize upon Alleyne's ships. But at the same time the Prince of Orange sent a secret message to Carleton urging him to direct Alleyne to be gone before the Commissioners arrived, and suggesting that, "for fashion's sake," Alleyne and the Dutch officials should fire in the air

[1] Carleton to Coke, Sept. 29; *S. P. Holland. Alleyne's Journal*, Oct. 2; Duppa to Nicholas, Oct. 3; *S. P. Dom.*, lxxx. 13, 26. *Mém. de Richelieu*, iii. 386.

1627. Sept.

over one another's heads as he sailed out of the harbour.[1] The imperturbable refusal of the Dutch to take offence is the more noteworthy, as Charles, weary with their delay in giving him satisfaction for the Amboyna massacre, had just seized upon three Dutch East Indiamen, and had lodged them safely under the guns of Portsmouth.

Oct. State of feeling in England.

All these tidings of failure before the enemy and provocation to allies came dropping in upon the ears of Englishmen during the month of October, whilst the Government was straining every nerve to get ready the reinforcements for Buckingham. What wonder if the feeling against Buckingham grew more bitter every day? So strong was it that it left its impression even on the letters of those who were nearest and dearest to the absent man. His wife, whose clinging tenderness was not to be turned aside by his many infidelities, had been saddened by the absence of him who was to her the head and front of all mankind. He had promised to see her before he went, and he had broken his promise. "For my part," she wrote when she first knew that he had slipped away from her, "I have been a very miserable woman hitherto, that never could have you keep at home. But now I will ever look to be so, until some blessed occasion comes to draw you quite from the Court. For there is none more miserable than I am now; and till you leave this life of a courtier, which you have been ever since I knew you, I shall ever think myself unhappy."[2] After the bad news of the introduction of supplies, a sense of her husband's

Letters of the Duchess of Buckingham.

[1] Carleton to Coke, Oct. 5; *S. P. Holland.*

[2] The Duchess of Buckingham to Buckingham, June 26 [?]; *S. P. Dom.*, lxviii. 3. This and the other letters have been quoted in part in the Preface to Mr. Bruce's *Calendar*, 1627-8.

CHAP. XV. 1627. June.

personal danger mingled with the thought of her own loneliness. Some hint he seems to have given of an intention of throwing himself into Rochelle. Against this, in writing to Dr. Moore, a physician in the camp, she protests with her whole soul. "I should think myself," she says, "the most miserablest woman in the world if my lord should go into the main land, for though God has blessed him hitherto beyond all imagination in this action, yet I hope he will not still run on in that hope to venture himself beyond all discretion; and I hope this journey hath not made him a Puritan, to believe in predestination. I pray keep him from being too venturous, for it does not belong to a general to walk trenches; therefore have a care of him. I will assure you by this action he is not any whit the more popular man than when he went; therefore you may see whether these people be worthy for him to venture his life for."[1]

Buckingham's correspondents.

Buckingham's mother, as a good Catholic, wrote in another tone, scolding her son for his blindness and presumption. "Dear mother," he had written from Rhé, "I am so full of business as hardly have I time to say my prayers, but hardly passes an hour that I perceive not His protecting hand over me, which makes me have recourse to your prayers to assist me in so great a duty. For my coming home, till I have means from England wherewithal to settle this army here, I cannot with any honour leave them. If it be possible for you to lend me some money, do it."[2] The Countess had plenty of good advice to give, but no money. "I am very sorry," she wrote, "you have

[1] The Duchess of Buckingham to Moore, Oct. 20 [?]; *S. P. Dom.*, lxxxii. 42.

[2] Buckingham to the Countess of Buckingham. Printed from the Earl of Denbigh's collection in the *Fourth Report of the Hist. MSS. Commission*, 256.

entered into so great business, and so little care to supply your wants, as you see by the haste that is made to you. I hope your eyes will be opened to see what a great gulf of businesses you have put yourself into, and so little regarded at home, where all is merry and well pleased, though the ships be not victualled as yet, nor mariners to go with them. As for moneys, the kingdom will not supply your expenses, and every man groans under the burden of the times. At your departure from me, you told me you went to make peace, but it was not from your heart. This is not the way; for you to embroil the whole Christian world in war, and then to declare it for religion, and make God a party to these woful affairs, so far from God as light from darkness, and the highway to make all Christian princes to bend their forces against us, that otherwise, in policy, would have taken our parts." [1]

Most of Buckingham's correspondents, however, wrote in a different strain. The Earl of Exeter told him that his success at Rhé was 'miraculous.' Dorset assured him that he had only to let him know his will, for if he failed to obey it he deserved to be 'whipped with double stripes.' [2] But even amongst those who were entirely dependent on his favour there were some whose anxieties would not allow them to conceal from him the misery at home. On September 21, amidst the difficulties of getting Holland's reinforcement ready, Sir Robert Pye, whose position as Auditor of the Exchequer gave him every opportunity of knowing the truth, uttered a note of warning. "Pardon me, I beseech you, if I humbly desire that you would advisedly consider of the end, and how far

Sept. Pye's warning.

[1] The Countess of Buckingham to Buckingham, Aug. 26 [?]; *S. P. Dom.*, lxxv. 22.

[2] Exeter to Buckingham, Nov. 3; Dorset to Buckingham, Aug. 21; *S. P. Dom.*, lxxxiv. 16. Preface to Bruce's *Calendar*, p. i.

CHAP. XV.

1627. Sept.

his Majesty's revenue of all kinds is now exhausted. We are upon the third year's anticipation beforehand; land, much sold of the principal; credit lost; and at the utmost shift with the commonwealth. I would I did not know so much as I do, for I do protest I would not for 500*l.* but I had been in the country. Deputy Lieutenants are not active, and justices of the peace of better sort are willing to be put out of commission, every man doubting and providing for the worst, so that all our fears increase at home. I know I please not, but I cannot see one I am so much bound unto, and not inform him my reason. I know no way to advise, but by some speedy accommodation of these loans, for nothing pleaseth so long as this is on foot, and of late no money, or little, hath been paid thereupon. For my own particular, I will lay myself to pawn for your Lordship, but so soon as the fort is taken I could wish your Lordship were here."[1]

Delays in Holland's expedition.

"So soon as the fort is taken," it was all very easy to say. But the taking of the fort depended on Holland's speedy setting out, and the difficulties in the way of Holland's expedition were almost insuperable. Weston might be, as Sir Humphrey May asserted, 'not a spark but a flame of fire in anything that concerned' the Duke. But the words with which this assertion was prefaced were none the less true. "It is easy for us to set down in paper ships and money, and arms, and victual, and men, but to congest these materials together, especially in such a penury of money, requires more time than the necessity of your affairs will well permit."[2]

The whole frame of government was unhinged. Lord Wilmot, a veteran who had seen hard service in

[1] Pye to Buckingham. Sept. 21; *S. P. Dom.*, lxxix. 2.
[2] May to Buckingham, Oct. 7; *ibid.*, lxxx. 60.

CHAP. XV.

1627.

Ireland, was to command the reinforcements which were to be shipped on board Holland's fleet. On the 6th of October he was waiting at Plymouth for supplies from London.[1] The warrant for the money needed for feeding the troops was only issued three days later.[2] On the same day, Sir James Bagg, Buckingham's creature, who had succeeded Eliot in the Vice-Admiralty of Devon, wrote that no money had been sent him to purchase provisions or to hire ships for his patron's relief. Of the new levies which were ordered to rendezvous at Plymouth, large numbers had, as was now usual, escaped the hateful service by desertion.[3] On the 11th, Wilmot again wrote that the supplies from London had not arrived, that he had no arms with which to train the men, and that the population of the county were exasperated at being forced to maintain the soldiers upon credit.[4] His answer was an order from Conway to put his men as soon as possible on board ships lying at Plymouth. Holland would sail from Portsmouth, and the whole expedition would meet before St. Martin's.[5]

Oct. 6. Oct. 9. Oct. 10. Oct. 11. Oct. 12.

Charles was growing anxious. "Since I have understood your necessities," he wrote to Buckingham, "for fault of timely supplies, I still stand in fear that these may come too late.[6] But I hope God is more merciful to me than to inflict so great a punishment on me." But even yet Wilmot could not start. On the 15th the ships from London had only reached the Downs.[7] On the same day Holland reported from

Oct. 13. The King's anxiety. Oct. 15.

[1] Wilmot to Conway, Oct. 6; *S. P. Dom.*, lxxx. 55.

[2] Docquet, Oct. 9; *S. P.*

[3] Commissioners at Plymouth to the Council, Oct. 10; *S. P. Dom.*, lxxxi. 4.

[4] Wilmot to Conway, Oct. 11; *ibid.*, lxxxi. 13.

[5] Conway to Wilmot, Oct. 12; *ibid.*, lxxxi. 25.

[6] The King to Buckingham, Oct. 13; *Hardw. St. P.*, ii. 19.

[7] Conway to Wilmot, Oct. 15; *S. P. Dom.*, lxxxi. 50.

CHAP. XV.

1627. Oct.

Portsmouth that nothing was ready, but that though the captains assured him that it would take ten or fifteen days to remedy the defects of their ships, he hoped to sail in two.[1]

On the 18th the long expected supplies from the Thames reached Plymouth. Holland, leaving Portsmouth on the 19th, was driven back to Cowes by a storm.[2] Leaving his windbound ships behind him he posted to Plymouth to meet Wilmot, who was then ready to sail.[3] But almost at the moment of his arrival the wind, which had been favourable at Plymouth, chopped round and blew steadily from the south-west.[4]

Oct. 21. Holland unable to leave.

Everything on board the provision ships was in confusion. No bills of lading were on board, no official to take any account of the stores. But it mattered little now. The pitiless wind made the voyage impossible. The Portsmouth squadron attempting once more to get out was driven back into the Solent.[5]

Oct. 25. The soldiers on board at Plymouth were eating the provisions destined for the army at Rhé.[6] On the

Oct. 28. 28th news from Buckingham reached London. The Duke had made up his mind to assault the fort. If Holland came in time with the supplies he would stay on the island. If not, he would throw himself into Rochelle, and run all hazards with its defenders.

Oct. 29. On the 29th the wind lulled, and the whole fleet left the Catwater. In the night the storm raged once more, and the ships were in great danger from the

[1] Holland to Conway, Oct, 15; *S. P. Dom.*, lxxxi. 5.
[2] Holland to Conway, Oct. 19; *ibid.*, lxxxii. 30, 31.
[3] Wilmot to Conway, Oct. 21; *ibid.*, lxxxii. 46.
[4] Holland to Conway, Oct. 22; *ibid.*, lxxxii. 58.
[5] Wilmot to Conway, Oct. 23; Mervyn to Nicholas, Oct. 23; *ibid.*, lxxxii. 66, 68.
[6] Ashburnham to Nicholas, Oct. 25; *ibid.*, lxxii. 87.

waves, lashed into fury in the then open waters of the Sound. The winds blew loudly for twenty hours. Even if the wind changed, wrote Wilmot, it would be long before the damaged ships could be repaired. The soldiers, besides, were ill armed, and there was no store at Plymouth to supply them.[1]

Nov. 2. Disorganisation of the Government.

If any evidence were still needed of the thorough disorganisation of the Government, it would be found in the circumstance that five or six hundred recruits arrived at Plymouth without any directions accompanying them. Nobody had orders to receive them, and Holland was obliged to support them out of his own pocket till he could persuade the unwilling Deputy Lieutenants to force their maintenance upon the county.[2]

Nov. 5. Goring's letter.

No wonder that one more of the Duke's confidants should be found bewailing to his patron the state of affairs at home. "In my last," wrote the courtly Goring, "I was bold to represent unto your Lordship the hazard you would run if you expected more timely supplies; for the City, from whence all present money must now be raised, or nowhere, is so infested by the malignant part of this kingdom, as no man that is moneyed will lend upon any security, if they think it to go the way of the Court, which now is made diverse from the State. Such is the present distemper. . . In a word, therefore, my dearest Lord, let me tell you what many honest-hearted men, divested of passion or by-ends say—that if it be true, as is here conceived, that the fort be again revictualled in such plenty as will force you to a winter siege at the best, before you can hope for any good success, that then your Lordship

[1] Conway to Holland, Oct. 28; Holland to Conway, Oct. 30; Wilmot to Conway, Oct. 31; *S. P. Dom.*, lxxxiii. 17, 32, 38.

[2] Holland to Conway, Nov. 2; *ibid.*, lxxxiv. 12.

CHAP. XV. 1627. Nov. 5.

would rather betake you to a new counsel, and think what way to curb the French insolency some other way than by a wilful struggling against them where the season and place give them such infinite advantage of you. Besides, my dear Lord, here at home—where your judgment is first to reflect—are such desperate obstructions as nothing but your presence can remove, and that will do it, if you will yet be pleased in time to look about you, or let me perish for a false, vile wretch to you." [1]

Nov. 6. The King's constancy.

Whatever others might think of him, Buckingham was still certain of the King's support. The letter written by Charles in the midst of all this uncertainty is very pathetic in its mingled spirit of resignation and confidence. "I pray God," he wrote, "that this letter be useless, or never come to your hands, this being only to meet you at your landing in England, in case you should come from Rhé without perfecting your work, happily begun, but I must confess with grief, ill seconded. This is therefore to give you power—in case ye shall imagine that ye have not enough already—to put in execution any of those designs ye mentioned to Jack Hippesley, or any other that you shall like of. So that I leave it freely to your will, whether, after your landing in England, ye will set forth again to some design before you come hither; or else that ye shall first come to ask my advice before ye undertake a new work; assuring you that, with whatsomever success ye shall come to me, ye shall ever be welcome, one of my greatest griefs being that I have not been with you in this time of suffering, for I know we would have much eased each other's griefs. I cannot stay longer on this subject, for fear of losing myself in it. To conclude, you cannot come so soon as ye are

[1] Goring to Buckingham, Nov. 5: *S. P. Dom.*, lxxxiv. 20.

welcome; and unfeignedly in my mind ye have gained as much reputation with wise and honest men, in this action, as if ye had performed all your desires." [1]

Charles's forebodings of evil, though he knew it not, were already realised. By the middle of October the condition of the besiegers was pitiable. The weather was cold and wet, and the men were exposed to grievous misery in the trenches. The officers were 'looking themselves blind' by sweeping the horizon with their telescopes for the first signs of Holland's fleet,[2] as in old days the soldiers of Nicias were gazing across the Sicilian sea for the triremes of Demosthenes. But for the south-west wind in the Channel, Holland would have been with them in less than a week, and the necessities of the troops would have been relieved. But Holland came not, and Buckingham was called on once more to face the question of relinquishing his enterprise.

Oct. 16. Position of affairs at Rhé.

Everything hung on the chances of Holland's arrival. If he came quickly, all might yet be well. If he delayed, the army might easily be exposed to an irreparable disaster. Was it strange that the officers of Buckingham's council concurred in taking a gloomy view of the situation, or that Buckingham himself, upon whom failure would weigh infinitely more heavily than upon all the rest together, hoped against hope, broke out into passionate reproaches against those who seemed to have forgotten him at home, and, whilst prudently making preparations for departure in case of necessity, still clung firmly to the spot on which he was.

The time was fast passing by when hesitation would be any longer possible. The smaller fort of La

[1] The King to Buckingham, Nov. 6; *Hardw. S. P.*, ii. 20.

[2] Bold to Nicholas, Oct. 16; Lewis to Nicholas, Oct. 16; *S. P. Dom.*, lxxxi. 59, 61.

CHAP. XV.

1627. Oct.

The French land in the island.

Prée had been left unassailed in July, and it now afforded a shelter to the French troops passing over from the mainland. By the 20th of October nearly 2,000 soldiers had been received within its walls and within the entrenchments which had been thrown up in front of it,[1] and the number might be expected to increase every day.

It was lamentable for Buckingham to be so near success and yet to miss it. Toiras had only provisions to last him till the 5th of November,[2] and, though the exact date was not known in the English camp, the conjectures formed by the besiegers were not far wrong. Between the greatness of the prize and the terrible consequences of exposure to a French attack upon his diminished army, Buckingham was unable to form a resolution. During the week which followed upon the last landing of the French there were continual combats, in which the English held their own. But it was certain that when fresh troops arrived at La Prée, Buckingham's position would be

[1] *Isnard*, 177-193. It is not for me, remembering the controversy about attacking the north side of Sebastopol after the battle of the Alma, to say whether Buckingham was right or wrong in neglecting La Prée. Of course he was blamed for what he did after the event, and Herbert, who represents the talk of the camp, says (50) that 'some of our ancient and well-experienced soldiers thought fit to begin with it,' whilst 'the pretenders to the Duke's favour advised him to begin with St. Martin's.' I do not see however that anybody supposed that the Duke was strong enough to attack both at once, and the only question therefore is whether he would have been able at the same time to master La Prée and to hinder Toiras from provisioning St. Martin's, so as to make a blockade practically impossible. As matters stood in July, there was no danger of the landing of the French troops at La Prée, because there were none to spare on the mainland. Such a danger did not arise till October. It therefore seems to me to be a perfectly sustainable argument, for those who care to embark on such speculations, that Buckingham took the wisest course. All that I am concerned with, however, is to show that he was not the mere infatuated being that history chooses to represent him.

[2] *Isnard*, 184.

CHAP. XV.

1627. Oct. 15.

untenable, and at last he reluctantly gave way to those who urged him to retreat. But in the desperate condition in which he was, he was ready to catch at any straw, and having heard that Toiras had but 500 men left capable of bearing arms,[1] he talked openly of ordering an assault upon the fortress, though an assault had long ago been regarded as a hopeless operation.[2] On the morning of the 27th the assault was tried. Toiras, probably through Buckingham's want of reticence, was amply forewarned, and the troops from La Prée came out to threaten the assailants in the rear. But even if secrecy had been maintained, the operation would probably have failed. The works of the citadel were intact, and the scaling ladders were too short. After a useless butchery, Buckingham was compelled to draw off his men.

Oct. 27. Attempted storm.

Military prudence counselled instant retreat. But Buckingham had not learned to steel his heart against suffering. The Rochellese urged him to protect them a little longer, whilst they gathered in provisions from the island to replace those which they had made over to the English army in the beginning of the month.[3] Neither could he bear to leave his own wounded to the mercies of the enemy. The whole of the next day was spent in shipping the injured men.[4] On the morning of the 29th it was too late. Marshal Schomberg had landed with fresh troops at La Prée, and advanced to the attack at the head of little less than 6,000 men.

Oct. 28.

Oct. 29. The retreat from St. Martin's.

Preparations for retreat had been duly made. A

[1] *Newsletter*, Nov. 5; *S. P. Dom.*, lxxxiv. 24.

[2] See the account of Courtney's conversation with Eliot, in *Forster*, i. 403.

[3] *Isnard*, 210.

[4] Crosby to Conway [?], Nov. 14 [?]; *S. P. Dom.*, lxxxiv. 78.

CHAP. XV.

1627. Oct. 29.

wooden bridge had been constructed across the marshes and the narrow arm of the sea which separated the Isle of Rhé from the smaller Isle of Loix,[1] and the bridge was to have been guarded by a fortified work to enable the troops to embark in safety. Unhappily, by some blunder, the causeway which led to the bridge from the side of the Isle of Rhé was left entirely undefended, whilst the further end of the bridge on the lesser island, to which the troops were marching, was alone guarded by an entrenchment. The French accordingly had but to watch their opportunity. As soon as three regiments were over they charged the handful of horse which had been left to guard the passage.[2] Yielding to the weight of numbers the English horse gave way, and dashing in headlong flight towards the bridge, threw the infantry into hopeless confusion. Almost at the same time a body of French, who had got round the three English regiments which had not crossed the bridge, fired upon them in the rear. From that moment a sheer massacre ensued. Two colonels were slain upon the spot. Not a horseman succeeded in crossing the bridge. "By this time," wrote the officer who had the command of the work beyond the bridge, "the Rochellese, having found another way on the left hand through the salt pits, made extraordinary haste to the bridge, and wedged themselves into the flank of Sir Alexander Brett's regiment then passing over, by means whereof, the passage being choked up, the enemy had the killing, taking, and drowning of our men at the bridge at his pleasure, without any hazard,

The slaughter on the bridge.

[1] Now joined to the larger island.

[2] Crosby notes on this leaving sixty horse to meet 200, "An error never to be sufficiently condemned in the Colonel-General and the Sergeant-Major-General, to whom the Duke committed the retreat." If this is true, and not a mere camp rumour, Buckingham was not responsible for the details of the manœuvres of that day.

musqueteers being not able to annoy them without endangering our own men." The bridge, too, had no protection at the sides, and large numbers fell over and were drowned. At first the soldiers who guarded the entrenchment were borne away by the flying rout. But at last a knot of men was rallied by the officers, and the French were driven back. At nightfall the English were still in possession of the entrenchment. Early in the morning the bridge was set on fire, and the remains of Buckingham's army were enabled to re-embark at their leisure.[1]

Oct. 30.

Estimate of the loss.

Various accounts have been given of the numbers lost in this disastrous retreat. The French claimed to have destroyed 2,000 men. The English authorities would hardly admit that more than 1,000 had perished.[2] But if the ravages caused by warfare and disease during the preceding weeks be taken into account, the English loss must be set down at little less than 4,000 men. On October 20 6,884 soldiers drew pay at St. Martin's. On November 8 the embarkation was effected without further difficulty, and after a short voyage 2,989 poor wretches, worn with hunger and enfeebled by disease, were landed at Portsmouth and Plymouth.[3]

Causes of the disaster.

One of the colonels has left on record his opinion of the proximate causes of the disaster. "It is not to be doubted," he says, "that the Duke had both courage, munificence, and industry enough, together with many other excellent parts, which in time would make him a renowned general. But his prime officers undervaluing his directions because of his inexperience, and taking a

[1] Crosby to [Conway ?] Nov. 14 [?]; *S. P. Dom.*, lxxxiv. 78. Compare *Herbert*, 224. The bird's-eye view given by Isnard brings the whole scene before us.

[2] *Herbert*, 257.

[3] Accounts of the number of soldiers, Oct. 20; Statement of the numbers, Nov.; *S. P. Dom.*, lxxxii. 43, lxxxv. 94.

CHAP. XV. 1627. Oct.

boldness in regard of his lenity to delinquents, did not only fail to co-operate with him, but by giving out that he cared not to expose them all for his own vain-glory, had infused into a great part of the army a mutinous disposition, insomuch as whatsoever was directed touching our longer abode or any attempt to be made upon the enemy was either cried down, or so slowly and negligently executed, as it took none effect. For instance, when it was resolved in council that the little fort should be besieged, they obstinately declined it.[1] On the other side, whatsoever tended to the retreat was acted with all possible expedition; as for example, the shipping of all the brass cannon, whereunto they had by surprise gotten his consent before the assault, by himself often repented of. In this distraction of affairs, the Duke was forced to resort to new and private counsels, by which he was then so guided that Dulbier, one author thereof, writing to his friend in Holland, used these words:—'*L'ignorance et la dissention qu'est entre les Anglois, m'a faict vendre les coquilles*[2] *à bon marché.*'"[3]

An inexperienced general, discontented commanders, and a half-mutinous soldiery were enough to ruin any undertaking, and it can hardly be denied that Buckingham's hesitation during the last few days went far to convert a necessary retreat into a terrible disaster. Yet neither must it be forgotten that except when he ordered the assault, his fault lay simply in his miscalculation of chances over which he had no control. But for the persistence of the south-west wind

[1] This cannot refer to the original question of besieging La Prée, but to some later resolution, probably when the French were beginning to land.

[2] '*Bien vendre les coquilles*' is '*tirer un profit exagéré d'une opération ou d'un service. Littré*, s.v., *coquille.*

[3] Crosby to Conway [?], Nov. 14 [?]; *S. P. Dom.*, lxxxiv. 78.

in the Channel, Holland would have been at Rhé about October 24 or 25, and the firmness of Buckingham in resisting the timid counsels of his subordinates would have been one of the common-places of history.

Buckingham at Rhé.

As a man Buckingham gains much from an impartial examination of his conduct in this expedition. At least he was no carpet knight, no mere courtier dancing attendance upon the powerful at banquets and festivities. No veteran could have surpassed him in the readiness with which he exposed his person to danger, and in his determination to see all with his own eyes, to encourage the down-hearted, and to care for the suffering of his men. After all, the charge which history has to bring against Buckingham is not so much that he failed in the expedition to Rhé, as that there was an expedition to Rhé at all. The politician, not the man, was at fault. Even if the French war had been justifiable in itself, the idea of undertaking it with no support but that of an alienated nation was hazardous in the extreme. For the south-west wind which kept Holland in port was but a secondary cause of the disaster. But for the thorough disorganisation of the English Government, which was the clear result of the quarrel with the House of Commons, Holland would have been able to start at least a fortnight earlier, whilst the wind was still favourable to his voyage. The position at Rhé after the succour had been thrown into the fort was something like that of the allied armies before Sebastopol after the failure of the first bombardment. But the allied armies had powerful Governments behind them, and the British army at least had the support of a nation feverishly anxious for the honour of its arms, and ready to pour forth its treasures without stint to support the enterprise which it had undertaken.

CHAP. XV.

1627. Nov.

Buckingham had nothing behind him but an attached but incapable Sovereign, and a handful of officials rendered inert by the dependence in which he had kept them, and by their knowledge of the ill-will with which every act of theirs was scanned by the vast majority of the nation.

CHAPTER XVI.

PREROGATIVE GOVERNMENT IN CHURCH AND STATE.

1627. Nov. 11. Buckingham's return.

On November 11 Buckingham landed at Plymouth. He was met by information that a plot had been formed to murder him on his way to London. He refused to take any precautions. In vain his young nephew, Denbigh's son, Lord Fielding, offered to change clothes with him in order to shield him from danger. He replied that if his enemies believed him to be afraid of danger, he would never be safe.[1]

The meeting between Buckingham and the King was extremely cordial. Charles threw the whole blame of failure upon the delay in sending supplies. And though Buckingham was well aware of the temper of his officers towards him, he had nothing but commendation to bestow upon them.[2] If he sometimes used hard language, it was directed against the officials at home, and he was even heard to charge the faithful Sir John Coke with stabbing him in the back in his absence.[3] But his anger soon cooled down, and he forgot to read the lesson of his failure in the excitement of preparation for fresh enterprises. Already he was talking of an attack upon Calais.[4] Whatever the plan

[1] *Rel. Wottonianæ*, i. 229.

[2] Conway to Sir E. Conway, Nov. 20; *S. P. Dom.*, lxxxv. 11.

[3] *Contarini's Despatch*, $\frac{\text{Nov. 22}}{\text{Dec. 2}}$.

[4] The King to Buckingham, Nov. 14; misdated in *Hardw. St. P.*, ii. 21.

CHAP. XVI.

finally resolved on might be, he was contemplating nothing but the active resumption of hostilities.

1627. Nov. Feeling in England.

Very different was the conclusion drawn outside the charmed circle of the Court. All through the summer news had been eagerly looked for, and rumours true or false had spread from mouth to mouth. In spite of the general unpopularity of the Government, sympathy with the Protestants of Rochelle was not dead, and the hopes of success which had been raised from time to time caused the final blow, 'the greatest and shamefullest overthrow,' as one letter-writer described it, 'since the loss of Normandy,' to fall all the more heavily. At first it was rumoured that not a single man or gun had been brought away.[1]

Although the exaggeration of the tale was soon discovered, every tongue was loosed in criticism, and the object of every criticism was the Duke. The sins of every officer and soldier fell, as was perhaps inevitable, upon the head of the contriver of the ill-starred expedition. "The disorder and confusion," wrote Denzil Holles to his brother-in-law Wentworth, "was so great, the truth is no man can tell what was done. This only every man knows, that since England was England it received not so dishonourable a blow. Four colonels lost, thirty-two colours in the enemy's possession; but more lost,—God knows how many men slain,—they say not above two thousand on our side, and I think not one of the enemy's." [2]

Effect of this feeling in stimulating resistance to the loan.

After this disaster, the resistance to the loan could no longer be treated from a purely legal point of view. The reply given in the summer by George Catesby when his contribution was demanded, "I will be master of my

[1] Letters to Mead, Nov. 16; *Court and Times*, i. 285.

[2] Holles to Wentworth, Nov. 19; *Strafford Letters*, i. 41.

own purse,"[1] would have had a somewhat sordid appearance if Charles had in reality required his money on behalf of an undoubted necessity of State. It was now impossible for the King to place himself before the world as the defender of his country's honour in the face of a factious opposition. A failure worse than that of Willoughby in 1626, a disaster worse than that of Wimbledon in 1625, had crowned the efforts of an ill-advised and reckless administration. Whoever favoured Buckingham and his designs stood forth in the eyes of all but a select circle of his admirers, as the worst enemy of his country.

Feb. Ecclesiastical difficulties.

As if to make Charles's difficulties yet greater, he had allowed the political strife between himself and his people to be still further embittered by involving it in the ecclesiastical problem which was already hard enough to solve. As soon as the demand for the loan had been made, each theological party drew instinctively to the side of its natural supporter. The Puritan, sharing as he did in the general sentiment of the House of Commons, and asking for nothing but the exclusive maintenance of a popular form of doctrine, trusted for support to the conservative feelings of the nation. The High Churchman, thirsting for change after the standard of an earlier age, looked to the Royal power as the lever with which he hoped to effect his purposes.

It is in the nature of things that the political theories and preferences of ecclesiastics should vary with the circumstances in which they find themselves, and it is easy to conceive a state of things in which Puritans would appeal to a Government for support and High Churchmen would throw themselves upon

[1] Letter to Mead, Feb. 23; *Court and Times*, i. 196.

CHAP. XVI.

1627. Feb.

popular sympathies. Yet it is difficult to imagine High Churchmen of the stamp of Laud and Montague placing any confidence in the general good-will of the people. They were too scholar-like and refined, too much inclined to throw doubt on the sweeping assertions which pass current with the multitude, and at the same time too little conversant with the world, to know how to bring their influence to bear upon those who distrusted or disliked them. As their idea of Church government was the idea of a system controlled by a minority of learned men without any consideration for the feelings and prejudices either of their learned antagonists or of the ignorant multitude; they looked with fondness upon the Royal authority which was alone able to give them the strength which they lacked.

Nature of the Royalism of the Laudian party.

"Defend thou me with the sword and I will defend thee with the pen," the sentence with which Montague concluded his *Appello Cæsarem*, expressed the common sentiment of the whole party. If these doctrines were slavish, they were only slavish as the doctrines of a Virginian slave-owner were slavish. They brought freedom to themselves if they enforced silence upon others. The predominance of Charles in the State meant the predominance of their own way of thinking, and the carrying out of their own principles into action. They did not see how insufficient these principles were for purposes of government. They did not see that even if they had been all that they fancied them to be, they were pinning their faith to the mere personal prepossessions of the reigning Sovereign. If Charles was their supporter and protector, who could say that his successor might not support and protect their opponents?

The King the centre of their system.

The future might take care of itself. For the present, to magnify the King's authority was the one way

CHAP. XVI. 1627.

of safety. The High Church party of Charles's reign was the least ecclesiastical of all ecclesiastical parties. The great Popes and Churchmen of the Middle Ages would have branded them as recreants to the cause of spiritual supremacy. It mattered little to them. In the King's authority they saw their only refuge against the tyrannical domination of the multitude, the only fulcrum by the aid of which they could hope to move the world, and to settle the English Church in that secure and orderly form which was the object of their aspirations.

1625. June 19. Laud's sermon.

Laud, preaching before the King when he opened his first Parliament, chose for his text, "When I shall receive the congregation, I will judge according unto right. The earth is dissolved, and all the inhabitants thereof; I bear up the pillars of it." The king, he declared, "is God's immediate lieutenant upon earth; and therefore one and the same action is God's by ordinance, and the king's by execution. And the power which resides in the king is not any assuming to himself, nor any gift from the people, but God's power, as as well in as over him." If the earth was not to dissolve, 'the king must trust and endear his people; the people must honour, obey, and support their king; both king and peers and people must religiously serve and honour God.' The king, however, could not take the whole of the burden of government upon himself. "There must be inferior judges and magistrates deputed by the king for this: men of courage, fearing God and hating covetousness. All judges, even this great congregation, this great council, now ready to sit, receive influence and power from the king, and are dispensers of his justice as well as their own, both in the laws they make and in the laws they execute; in the causes which they hear, and in the sentences which

CHAP. XVI. 1625.

they give: the king God's high steward, and they stewards under him." [1]

June 19. Nature of his theory of government.

Even the Parliament then was but an instrument in the King's hands, for 'counsel not for control,' as Charles afterwards said. Laud's view of the constitution was no new theory evolved out of the recesses of his own mind. It was in the main the doctrine of the Tudor sovereigns, the doctrine under which England had won its national independence from Rome. The authority of the State, according to this view, did not lie in the multitude, necessarily ignorant and driven hither and thither by passion and prejudice. It lay with him whom God had placed at the helm, and who knew better what was good for the people than they could possibly know for themselves. But the authority was his, not to gratify his own will, but to do judgment and justice. As long as he did this he would be an instrument in God's hands for bearing up the pillars of the world.

1626. Influence of current events on him.

Many months had not passed since the delivery of this sermon before everywhere men were beginning to look about for some other theory to live by. Whatever they might think about the King, they had no longer any belief that his ministers wished to do judgment and justice. But it was not in the nature of things that these views should be shared by Laud and his friends. To them the House of Commons, which attacked Montague and impeached Buckingham, had ceased to do judgment and justice, and they clung all the more closely to the only power in England which they believed to be willing to do them right.

1627.

In this temper they were found by the forced loan. Looking with admiration upon the King's ecclesiastical

[1] *Laud's Works*, i. 93.

CHAP. XVI.

1627. Feb. 22. Sibthorpe's sermon.

policy, they cared little about his foreign policy, and were willing to take it upon trust. The victory of Parliament would be a terrible blow to them, and they threw themselves eagerly upon Charles's side. One of them, Dr. Robert Sibthorpe, preaching before the Judges at the Lent Assizes at Northampton, set forth the Royal pretensions with irritating plainness of speech. It was the duty of the prince, he said, to 'direct and make laws.' Subjects were bound to pay active obedience to the king, except when his commands were either impossible, or contrary to the laws of God or nature. But even then they were not to resist him.[1]

Sibthorpe's sermon was by no means remarkable for ability, but it might be useful as a manifesto in behalf of the loan, and Archbishop Abbot was ordered by the King to license it for the press. The sanction of the highest authority in the Church was thus demanded for the loan, just as the sanction of the highest authority in the law had been demanded a few weeks before. But Abbot proved as impracticable as Crew. He had no objection to make against the ceremonies of the Church, but his austere and ungenial mind was thoroughly wedded to the Calvinistic system of doctrine, and in consequence thoroughly opposed to Laud and his ways. Something, too, of personal bitterness doubtless mingled with nobler motives. Laud had supplanted him with Charles, as Williams had supplanted him with James. Since Buckingham's predominance had been undisputed, he had ceased to attend the Privy Council, where his word was held to be of little worth. And now he fancied that the message which he had received was a trick of Buckingham's

Abbot refuses to license it.

[1] Through the kindness of Mr. Wilson, of Great Russell Street, I was able to obtain a sight of this sermon, *Apostolical Obedience*, which I could not find in the Museum Library.

CHAP. XVI. 1627.

to bring him into still further discredit with the King, if he refused to do that which his conscience forbade him to do.

Once before in his life Abbot had bearded a king, when he refused to marry Somerset to the divorced Countess of Essex. He now again refused to conform to the Royal orders. The consequences which he predicted were not long in coming upon him. Independence could not be suffered in the Church any more than on the Bench. On July 4 Abbot was ordered to betake himself to Ford, a mansion in Kent belonging to the See of Canterbury, and there to remain in confinement. On October 9 a further indignity was placed upon him. The Archbishopric could not be taken away, but he could be deprived of his jurisdiction on the plea that he was unable to attend to his duties in person. The control of the Church Courts was placed in the hands of a Commission of which Laud was the leading spirit. Care would now be taken to keep in check those who, contrary to the King's proclamation, ventured to write books against Arminianism.[1]

July 4. Abbot sent into confinement.

Oct. 9. Abbot's jurisdiction sequestered.

Laud rose higher in the King's favour as Abbot fell. Hopes had been given to him of succeeding eventually to the Archbishopric of Canterbury, and now on June 17, just as Buckingham was sent to Rhé, Charles promised him the Bishopric of London as soon as a vacancy occurred.[2] As Buckingham imposed upon Charles by the romantic side of his nature, filling

Laud strong in the King's favour.

[1] Commission, Oct. 9; *State Trials*, ii. 1451. Abbot's narrative in *Rushworth*, i. 434. Fuller's blunder (vi. 42), that Abbot was suspended for his 'casual homicide,' has been exposed by Heylin, *Examen*, 206. But it has probably done more than anything else to keep alive the belief that Abbot's retirement from affairs was owing to that cause. The part which he took in the Parliament of 1628, and which is only known by the revelations of *Elsing's Notes*, shows that he did not shrink from public activity when he expected any good to come of it.

[2] Heylin, *Life of Laud*, 174; *Laud's Diary*. *Works*, iii. 196.

his mind by the promise of those great achievements upon which he loved to dwell, Laud imposed upon him by his love of external authority and his contempt for the popular will. Two such counsellors were enough to ruin any prince.

May 8. Sibthorpe's sermon licensed.

By this time a licenser had been found for Sibthorpe's sermon in the least reputable of the Prelates then living. Montaigne, Bishop of London, has been severely dealt with by both of the Church parties. "Which," wrote Milton ironically of the condition of a primitive bishop, "what a plural endowment to the many-benefice-gaping mouth of a prelate, what a relish it would give to his canary-sucking and swan-eating palate, let old Bishop Montaigne judge for me."[1] Even Laud's admiring biographer Heylin spoke of him as 'a man inactive and addicted to voluptuousness, and one that loved his ease too well to disturb himself in the concernments of the Church.'[2] The year before he had made himself notorious by the vigour with which he threw himself into the support of Buckingham's candidature at Cambridge, and he had recently, in sending a present to the Duke, assured him that he could not live if the present were refused. For, he said, when God returns back a man's sacrifice, it is because he is offended with him.[3]

Bishop Montaigne.

Such men as Montaigne are the bane of the party which they dishonour with their support. Sibthorpe's sermon had done much to exasperate the popular feeling. But there were others who were prepared to go to greater lengths than Sibthorpe. In two sermons preached before the King in July, Dr. Roger Manwaring asserted in the strongest possible terms the duty of obeying the King as the ordinance of God, on pain of

July. Manwaring's sermons.

[1] *On Reformation in England.*

[2] Heylin, *Life of Laud*, 174.

[3] Montaigne to Buckingham, March [?] 1627; *S. P. Dom.*, lviii. 102.

CHAP. XVI.

1627. July.

eternal damnation. The King represented the rule of justice as opposed to that of mere numbers. He then applied the argument to the refusers of the loan. "First," he said, after a reference to those who appealed to Parliamentary right, "if they would please to consider that though such assemblies as are the highest and greatest assemblies of a kingdom, be most sacred and honourable, and necessary also to those ends to which they were at first instituted; yet know we must, that ordained they were not to this end, to contribute any right to kings, whereby to challenge tributary aids and subsidiary helps; but for the more equal imposing and more easy exacting of that which unto kings doth appertain by natural and original law and justice, as their proper inheritance annexed to their imperial crowns from their birth. And therefore if by a magistrate that is supreme, if upon necessity extreme and urgent, such subsidiary helps be required, a proportion being held respectively to the ability of the persons charged, and the sum and quantity so required surmount not too remarkably the use and charge for which it was levied, very hard would it be for any man in the world that should not accordingly satisfy such demands, to defend his conscience from that heavy prejudice of resisting the ordinance of God, and receiving to himself damnation; though every of those circumstances be not observed, which by the municipal law is required.

"Secondly, if they would consider the importunities that often may be urgent, and pressing necessities of State that cannot stay without certain and apparent danger for the motion and revolution of so great and vast a body as such assemblies are, nor yet abide their long and pausing deliberation when they are assembled, nor stand upon the answering of those jealous and

over-wary cautions and objections made by some who, wedded overmuch to the love of epidemical and popular errors, and bent to cross the most just and lawful designs of their wise and gracious sovereign; and that under plausible shows of singular liberty and freedom, which, if their conscience might speak, would appear nothing more than the satisfying either of private humours, passions, or purposes." [1]

Such was the argument which Charles wished to see printed for the instruction of his subjects. Even Laud remonstrated. There were things in the sermon, he said, 'which would be very distasteful to the people.' But Charles was resolute. Montaigne was ordered to license the book, and Montaigne once more did as he was bid.[2]

Manwaring's opinions.

Posterity has wisely decided against the principles advocated by Manwaring. Whatever the evils were which he attacked, the remedy which he proposed was undoubtedly worse than the disease. Yet it would be unfair to deny that the germ of much that was evil existed in the pretensions of the House of Commons. In defending the rights of the individual against arbitrary taxation, words were sometimes spoken which might be used to countenance that undue reverence for property and vested rights which was the bane of the eighteenth century, and to discountenance that higher ideal according to which each man is called to justify his claims upon society by arguments founded upon the welfare of the society in which he lives. Nor is it possible to deny that the growing ascendancy of the House of Commons, desirable as it was, had yet its ugly

[1] This extract, brought before the Lords by Pym, is printed in *State Trials*, iii. 346. A copy of the two sermons, printed under the title 'Religion and Allegiance,' is in the Library of Sion College.

[2] *State Trials*, iii. 351. Books might be licensed by the Archbishop of Canterbury or the Bishop of London.

CHAP. XVI.

1627. July.

side; that it might come to represent the interests rather than the wisdom of the nation, and that, unless the national mind were aroused to reverence for justice, it might be as arbitrary as Charles had ever been, as little inclined to deal justly with those who were from any cause regarded with detestation or contempt by any considerable majority of its members.

But to say this is simply to say that Parliament no more approaches ideal perfection than kings are likely to approach it. It was Manwaring's mistake that he exaggerated that which was worst in the House of Commons, and that he exaggerated still more that which was best in Charles. What he saw in the Royal authority was that which enthusiastic dreamers always imagine that they see in the government of their preference. Royalty was to him what the Republic has been to many a republican. What he sighed for was a ruler who would look beyond the wants of the moment, beyond the petty exigencies of partisan and private objects, to that ideal justice to which the influence of wealth would be no seduction and the clamour of ignorance no hindrance. The authority of kings, he asserts, rising almost into poetic fervour as he utters the words, is derived directly from God. It has no dependence even upon angels. Nothing in the world, nothing in the hierarchy of the Church, can restrain them. "No parts within their dominions, no persons under their jurisdictions, be they never so great, can be privileged from their power, nor be exempted from their care be they never so mean. To this power the highest and greatest peer must stoop, and cast down his coronet at the footstool of his sovereign. The poorest creature which lieth by the wall or goes by the highway-side, is not without sundry and sensible tokens of that sweet and royal care

and providence which extendeth itself to the lowest of his subjects. The way they pass by is the king's highway. The laws which make provision for their relief take their binding force from the supreme will of their liege lord. The bread that feeds their hungry souls, the poor rags which hide their nakedness, all are the fruit and superfluity of that happy plenty and abundance caused by a wise and peaceable government."

Objections to the theory.

The time would come when a triumphant Parliament would be forced to hear from the lips of Cromwell that a great country cannot be ruled by mere law and custom, whilst those who are entrusted with its guidance are fattening upon the abuses which they have neither the will nor the understanding to remove. In 1627 the immediate danger did not lie here. Whatever Laud or Manwaring might think, Charles's government was in no sense of the word a national government, able to appeal to the higher needs of the people, and to take its stand above disputing factions. How such a government would rise upon the basis of the Parliamentary institutions of the seventeenth century was the secret of the future. The claim of Parliaments to predominance had yet to be rendered otherwise than intolerable by the full admission of the air of liberty and publicity within its walls to an extent which the foremost men of Charles's reign found it impossible to conceive. But even as it was, with all its faults, the hope of England was in the House of Commons and not in Charles. The Commons, it is true, had failed in apprehending the full meaning of religious liberty; they had made mistakes in their mode of dealing with this or that action of the Crown. But the great principle that, when new circumstances call for new modes of action, the course to be pursued must be resolved upon in concurrence with those men whom the nation chooses or

CHAP. XVI.

1627. July.

allows to represent it, was the principle upon which the greatness of England had rested in past ages, and the vindication of which was the business upon which the Parliaments of Charles's day employed themselves for the benefit of posterity.

It was fitting that the first answer—if not to Manwaring's sermons, at least to the spirit by which those sermons were prompted—should proceed from Eliot, the man to whom the House of Commons was the representative of as high a wisdom as the King was to Manwaring, and to whom the old laws of England were not records of the dead past, telling a mingled tale of wisdom and folly, but words fraught with stern resolve and prophetic hope, in which a mighty nation had recorded for all future time the conditions on which alone it would deign to live, and from which no subsequent generation on pain of degradation might dare to depart.

Eliot's petition from the Gatehouse.

From his prison in the Gatehouse Eliot's petition was sent to the King,[1] humble in outward form, unbending in its firm reliance on the strength of the position it assumed. "The rule of justice," he declared, "he takes to be the law; the impartial arbiter of government and obedience; the support and strength of majesty; the observation of that justice by which subjection is commanded; whereto religion, adding to these a power not to be resisted, binds up the conscience in an obligation to that rule, which without open prejudice and violation to those duties, may not be impeached."

Then came a string of quotations from statutes of the first and third Edward directed against taxation

[1] Printed in Forster's *Eliot*, ii. 410. The petition seems to have been generally adopted by others in like circumstances (*Forster*, 408, note 4). But the language seems characteristic of Eliot, and I have no doubt that he had at least a main hand in drawing it up, doubtless after consultation with lawyers.

without the consent of Parliament, followed by the one clause which bore directly upon the question of the loan. In the reign of Edward III., on the petition of the Commons, it had been "established that the loans which are granted to the king by divers persons be released, and that none from henceforth be compelled to make such loans against their wills, because it is against reason and the franchises of the land; and that restitution be made to such as made such loans."

Precedents affecting the loan.

Looked at narrowly, it may perhaps be doubted how far these words will bear the interpretation placed upon them. The case in the time of Edward III. appears to have been that the Royal officers first compelled certain merchants to advance beforehand customs which were not due for some months to come, and subsequently refused repayment of the money thus obtained.[1] An advocate of the prerogative might perhaps ask what this had to do with a demand made generally in a case of pressing necessity, when the House of Commons had, as he would say, taken advantage of the King's circumstances to impose their will upon the Crown in defiance of the constitution of the kingdom. But it is needless to pursue further such investigations. The strength of Eliot's case lay precisely in that which even he did not venture to say, that the necessity, so far as it was a necessity at all, had arisen from sheer misgovernment, and that the appeal to a higher law than that of the realm, which Charles was continually making, needed no discussion because no case had really arisen making such an appeal needful.

Point of view from which the question is to be regarded.

Such is the point of view which the modern reader should keep resolutely before his eyes. If the gentry who closed their purses against the loan had believed that a real danger existed, or that Buckingham's policy was

[1] 25 Edw. III., *Rolls of Parliament*, ii. 239, compared with ii. 230.

CHAP. XVI. 1627.

really calculated to advance the cause of Protestantism, they would surely not have been extreme to mark any deviation from the strict laws of constitutional propriety. Many of them were the same men who in 1621 and in 1624 had kept silence on the subject of the impositions, deeply as they felt the wrong which had been done to them. Their belief that the whole argument from necessity was based upon a fiction must be taken for granted. But it was none the less present to their minds because they veiled it in silence before that sovereign whom they longed to honour and reverence above all human beings.

Five of the prisoners demand their *habeas corpus*.

At last five of the prisoners, Sir Thomas Darnel, Sir John Corbet, Sir Walter Erle, Sir John Heveningham, and Sir Edmund Hampden, appealed to the Court of King's Bench for a *habeas corpus* in order that they might know what their offence had been. On November 15 they were brought to the bar, and the 22nd was appointed for the argument of their counsel.

Nov. 22. The defence.

Four notable lawyers, Bramston, Noy, Selden, and Calthrop, appeared for the defence. It was admitted on both sides that the King and the Council had a right to commit to prison. But it was held on the part of the defendants that the cause of committal must be expressed in order that the case might come before the Court of King's Bench, which would proceed to bail the prisoner or to remand him to prison if it saw fit, till the day of trial came. From this point of view the King and the Privy Council would be reduced to the position occupied in less important cases by ordinary justices of the peace. They would merely prepare the case for the King's Bench, and if they were too long in their preparations, the Judges, on being appealed to, would set the prisoner at liberty on bail.

Whether this were right or wrong, it is certain that it had not been the practice in England for many

1627. Nov. 22.

years. The Privy Council had again and again kept persons in prison as dangerous to the State without attempting to bring them to trial,[1] and those so imprisoned had patiently awaited their deliverance from the King's mercy without venturing an appeal to a court of justice. On the other hand the Privy Councillors had taken their own time in preparing accusations, sometimes because fresh evidence was expected, sometimes because they had reasons for keeping the prisoner shut up as long as possible.

And now, inspired by the indignation which had blazed up everywhere on the imposition of the loan, these four lawyers stood forward to plead that all this was utterly illegal. They had much to say for themselves. Magna Charta, they urged, declared that "no man should be imprisoned except by the legal judgment of his peers, or by the law of the land," and these latter words, they said, were interpreted by certain statutes of the time of Edward III. to mean "due process of law," which an examination before the Privy Council was not. They then drew attention to the consequences which would result from any other interpretation. If the Privy Council could imprison without showing a cause upon which the Court of King's Bench could act, a man might never leave his prison till he was released by death. The argument was followed by a long string of precedents in which persons committed by the Privy Council had been brought before the King's Bench to be bailed as a preparation for trial.

Argument from Magna Charta,

and from precedents.

When the argument was concluded, the decorum of the place was startled by unusual sounds. Men shouted out their approval and clapped their hands for

Effect of the argument.

[1] Arabella Stuart, for instance, and more recently the Earl of Arundel, for whom no claim had been put forward, except when Parliament was sitting.

CHAP. XVI.

1627. Nov. 22.

joy.[1] Even the Judges themselves were shaken. "Mr. Attorney," said Jones, "if it be so that the law of Magna Charta and other statutes be now in force, and the gentlemen be not delivered by this Court, how shall they be delivered? Apply yourselves to show us any other way to deliver them." "Or else," said Doderidge, "they shall have a perpetual imprisonment."

Nov. 26. Heath's argument for the Crown.

Heath was not likely to startle the Court by placing his argument for the Crown in an extravagant form. The precedents on the other side he met by showing, at least to his own satisfaction, that they were all cases in which the King had voluntarily handed over the prisoners to be dealt with in the King's Bench, and that they therefore proved nothing as to the course which the Court ought to take if the King refused to do so. Further, he urged that due process of law extended to committals by the King, just as it extended to committals by a justice of the peace, or to committals by the House of Commons itself. In Queen Elizabeth's time the Judges, as was proved by a statement alleged, incorrectly as it afterwards appeared, to have been drawn up by Chief Justice Anderson, had decided, after due consultation, that the King was not bound in all cases to show cause. For, as Heath argued, one of two things might happen. There might be persons who had committed no crime which would bring them under the ordinary penalties of the law, but whose liberty would be dangerous to the State. In support of this theory he referred to the children of an Irish chieftain, who had themselves done no wrong, but who had been condemned to a life-long imprisonment in the Tower, lest their liberation would be the signal of a revolution in Ireland. Upon this

[1] — to Mead, Nov. 23; *Court and Times*, i. 292.

branch of his argument, however, the Attorney-General did not lay much stress. The days were long passed when, in England at least, any individual was likely to be dangerous from his social position, and Heath had more to say on the other branch of his argument. It was the duty of the Privy Council to prepare matters for trial. These matters, often involving the discovery of deeply laid plots, frequently demanded a long time to disentangle their intricacies. If the cause of committal were at once signified, and the trial hurried on, accomplices would escape and the ends of justice would be frustrated. All the Judges were asked to do was to trust the King that he had good reasons for withholding the case for the present from their knowledge.

Nov. 26.

The next day judgment was delivered. If Coke had been upon the Bench he would probably have seized the opportunity of asserting the supremacy of the Court over all causes whatever. But Hyde was not a Coke; and though the other Judges, Whitelocke, Doderidge, and Jones, were honourable men, they were not likely to see their way clearly in so difficult a path. The Judges took a middle course.[1] Adopting Heath's

Nov. 28. The judgment.

[1] Whitelocke, when examined in the House of Lords, said that the prisoners might have had a fresh *habeas corpus* the next day. The Judges only took time to advise. "I did never see nor know by any record that upon such a return as this a man was bailed, the King not first consulted with in such a case as this. The Commons' House do not know what letters and commands we receive, for these remain in our Court and are not viewed by them." I do not understand these last words as implying that there were private solicitations and threats addressed to the Judges, for these could not be said to remain in court. I fancy the argument is that the Judges had a right to decide whether they would liberate or no, and that they ought to decide in favour of liberty if the prisoner remained in prison too long; but that the special mandate of the King was a *primâ facie* argument that there was a good cause, though it was not expressed. All that was needed was that the Judges should be convinced that there was a good cause, and it was not necessary to have it argued in open court. This information they would derive from 'letters and commands,' and

CHAP. XVI.

1627. Nov. 28.

view on the statutes and precedents, they held that it would be impertinence on their part to hasten the King's proceedings. They therefore refused to admit the prisoners to bail. But, on the other hand, they refused to leave any evidence on the records of the Court that they held that the Crown might persistently refuse to show cause.[1]

The question not settled.

It was perhaps best as it was. The question in debate opened up so many issues reaching far too widely for the decision of a purely legal tribunal, that it was well that it should be debated in an assembly more competent to rise to the height of the great argument. For it is evident that Heath's strongest point as a lawyer would be his weakest when he came to appeal to statesmen. The Judges might hesitate to sanction a doctrine which might allow a wily Pretender to the crown to wander about untouched on English soil, or might force on the premature disclosure of the clue by which the Government hoped to come upon the traces of some second Gunpowder Plot. But the multitude, which had broken through the the stern rules of etiquette by applauding the popular lawyers a week before, knew full well that nothing of the kind was really at issue at the moment. Eliot and Hampden had no influence in England beyond that of the principles which they professed. And it was a matter of notoriety that there was no fresh evidence to be collected, no deep conspiracy to be tracked in its secret windings. If all that Charles wanted was to obtain the decision of the Court of King's Bench upon the legality of the loan, he might have sent every one of the

would exercise the discretion which a police magistrate now exercises when he grants a remand upon application in open court, on the ground that the evidence is not complete. *Rushworth*, i. 560.

[1] *State Trials*, iii. 1.

CHAP. XVI.

1627. Dec.

prisoners to trial months before as easily as he could now.

Yet the prospect of seeing the legality of the King's proceedings discussed in Parliament seemed more distant than ever. The Duke talked confidently of ruining French commerce, and of carrying on the war for many years.[1] He argued that what had happened was no fault of his. His honour was safe. He had been deserted by those who ought to have succoured him at home. But, whatever the explanation might be, there was no turn in the tide of his mishaps. In the beginning of December it was settled that Carlisle should go upon the Continent, to take up the web of intrigue which Walter Montague[2] had spun. In a few days news arrived that an officer commissioned by Richelieu had swooped down upon Montague as he was passing through Lorraine, and, in spite of the protection of neutral territory, had carried him and his despatches to Paris. Montague was lodged in the Bastille. His papers, with all they had to tell of intrigues with the Dukes of Savoy and Lorraine and with the French aristocracy, were under the cold, penetrating eyes of the Cardinal.[3]

The Duke's difficulties.

Nov. W. Montague seized by the French.

At home matters were in the greatest possible confusion. Before the end of November Buckingham had gone to Portsmouth, and had distributed money in his affable way amongst the soldiers and sailors.[4] But he could do no more than satisfy them for a time. His back was hardly turned when letter after letter came to assure him that everything was in disorder.[5] At

Want of money at home.

[1] *Contarini's Despatch*, Dec. $\frac{4}{14}$.

[2] P. 126.

[3] *Contarini's Despatch*, Dec. $\frac{4}{14}$. Beaulieu to Puckering, Dec. 12, 19; Mead to Stuteville, Dec. 15; *Court and Times*, i. 303–307. Richelieu, *Mém.*

[4] *Contarini's Despatch*, $\frac{\text{Nov. } 22}{\text{Dec. } 2}$.

[5] Bagg to Buckingham, Nov. 29; Courteney to Buckingham, Nov. 29; *S. P. Dom.*, lxxxv. 61, 64.

CHAP. XVI.

1627. Dec.

Misery of the sailors.

Plymouth the sailors were stealing and selling the soldiers' arms; all were without sufficient clothes in the wintry weather; the ships were leaky, and there were scarcely sailors enough on board to carry them round to the Medway to be docked at Chatham.[1] The soldiers were paid till the 10th of December, but there were no means of doing anything more.[2] Captain Mason was sent down to set matters straight, but he reported that Sir James Bagg, whose business it had been to pay the men, had received large sums for which he was unable or unwilling to account.[3] At Portsmouth matters were even worse. Many of the ships' companies prepared to desert in a body and to march up to Whitehall with their complaints. It was only upon a false assurance that money was coming to relieve them at Christmas, that they consented to remain on board. They had not, they said, been paid for ten months. Their clothes were worn out, and they knew not what to do.[4]

The soldiers' outrages.

If the sailors were in evil plight no one suffered but themselves. But the soldiers billeted about the country spread the mischief in all directions. It was bad enough for a quiet countryman to be forced to entertain for due payment a number of rough young men whose character before they were pressed into the service was probably none of the best. But when payment did not come the burden threatened to become utterly unendurable. The Irish in Essex were especially obnoxious to the peasant. They treated him and his family as the dust beneath their feet. They flung about the goodwife's household utensils.

[1] Holland to Buckingham, Dec. 5; *S. P. Dom.*, lxxxvi. 15.
[2] Bagg to Buckingham, Dec. 7; *ibid.*, lxxxvi. 27.
[3] Mason to Buckingham, Dec. 13; *ibid.*, lxxxvi. 70, 75.
[4] Watts to Buckingham, Dec. 16; *ibid.*, lxxxvi. 83, 86.

They broke the furniture, and threw the meat into the fire if it did not suit their tastes.[1] A German peasant would perhaps have wondered at their gentleness, and would have thanked God that they did not proceed to graver outrages still. In England, what was done was enough to rouse public indignation in classes which the loan had hardly reached.

Means proposed for raising money.

At all costs money must be had. The loan had brought in on the whole 236,000*l.*, only 52,000*l.* less than the sum originally expected.[2] There was a talk, if rumour might be believed, of recurring to a fresh loan.[3] But the idea, if it was ever seriously entertained, was soon abandoned, excepting so far as 10,000*l.* were extracted on some pretence or other from the Six Clerks of the Court of Chancery. The only resource left was the mortgage or sale of Crown lands. In this way 143,000*l.* were obtained in the half-year beginning at Michaelmas, and on December 17 the City of London agreed to pay 120,000*l.* by instalments on the security of the King's rents from landed property.[4]

Pressing necessities.

The whole sum thus obtained was 273,000*l.* But even this amount, large as it was, did not cover the deficit of the past year, the anticipations on the revenue on December 29 amounting to 319,000*l.*,[5] or little less than two-thirds of the whole ordinary revenue of the Crown. And even if this could be paid off, the pressure of the preparations for war was enormous. Together with the recruits which had been levied to reinforce Buckingham at Rhé, there were now 7,557 land soldiers

[1] The inhabitants of Maldon to the Council, with inclosures, Feb. 10[?]; *S. P. Dom.*, xcii. 85.

[2] State of the loan up to Nov. 30; *ibid.*, lxxxv. 77.

[3] — to Mead, Nov. 30; *Court and Times*, i. 296.

[4] Proceedings of the Common Council, Dec. 17; *S. P. Dom.*, lxxxvi. 97.

[5] List of anticipations, Dec. 29; *ibid.*, lxxxvii. 63.

CHAP. XVI.

1627. Dec

and 4,000 seamen, entitled to pay at the rate of 200,000*l.* a year. If fifty sail were to be sent out in the spring, 110,000*l.* more would be needed for repairs and munitions,[1] and there was besides the immediate necessity of providing and sending out the provisions urgently wanted by Rochelle before its supplies were cut off by the besieging forces.

The one thing needed was to make peace. But peace was the last thing of which either Buckingham or Charles thought. The dislike of the French war, which was universal in the nation, had settled down upon the Privy Council. Some of its members were more loquacious than others. But those who had the best opportunities of judging were of opinion that Charles and the Lord High Admiral stood alone in their resolution to resist all reasonable overtures of peace.

Charles determined on carrying on the war.

Not, indeed, that they acknowledged the case to be so in their own minds. When the King of France sent back the prisoners taken at Rhé without demanding a ransom,[2] the Venetian ambassador thought it a fair opportunity to urge Charles to meet these advances in a conciliatory spirit. "I will not say," was the King's reply, "that the retreat was fortunate, but neither can I assert that it was ruinous. My intentions were always directed towards the common cause, without the remotest thought of ever gaining a span of territory from France, knowing that circumstances were unsuited to such a design. Had not the King my brother allowed me to give a guarantee for the Huguenots, I should never have stirred. But as his intentions were always false and feigned, as appeared by his actions in the employment of Mansfeld, in the

[1] Note of charges, Dec. 22; *S. P. Dom.*, lxxxvii. 35.

[2] *Contarini's Despatch*, Dec. $\frac{18}{28}$.

league for the Valtelline, and in the affair of the edicts he promised to the Huguenots, I deemed it a lesser evil to have him for an open enemy than to have him for a false friend, in order that I might prevent his corrupt policy from taking effect. I am aware that this is not the moment for calling him to account for the lesser injuries he has done me. Whenever he makes me think he is of the same mind, I shall readily join him in the relief of Germany.

"But he is determined to destroy Rochelle, and I am determined to support it; for I will never allow my word to be forfeited.

"I believe that the safest plan would be to recommence operations, and to send an army of 20,000 men to Rochelle, from which point succour could be given to the whole Huguenot body. I am convinced that in this way I and the King of France will be the sooner friends."

Buckingham's views.

In much the same way Buckingham spoke. "The French," he said, "have vowed to destroy Rochelle, and we to preserve it. As long as this punctilio exists there is no use in treating or speaking of peace. Let all men beware of dealing with Frenchmen, for they are thoroughly false."[1]

With such sentiments as these peace was hopeless. Yet how were the growing expenses of the war to be met? Buckingham, audacious as ever, advocated the calling of a Parliament. The last of all men to believe that his actions would not stand the light, he threw himself on his knees before the King. If he were found worthy of death, he said, let them not spare him.[2] After Christmas he made the same proposal in

[1] *Contarini's Despatch*, $\frac{\text{Dec. } 23}{\text{Jan. } 2}$. As I have merely a translation of a translation before me, I have altered some of the less important words, so as to bring out the sense more clearly.

[2] Mead to Stuteville, Dec. 15; *Court and Times*, i. 304.

CHAP. XVI. 1627. Dec.

open council, but the King would not hear of such a measure. The Councillors knew not what to think when they heard the great Duke pleading for once in vain. They fancied there was some collusion, and that the scene had been pre-arranged for the purpose of winning popularity for the favourite. Then was seen the effect of such predominance as Buckingham's upon the men whom he had trained to flatter, not to counsel. Not a man ventured to open his mouth to give advice. The sovereign and the favourite were isolated at the council board as they were in the nation.[1]

Debate in the Council on taxation.

It is far more likely that Buckingham expressed his real opinions. The Council, however, had to obey the King, and they were called upon to discuss the best means of filling up the deficiency irregularly.[2] They were first asked to declare whether they would themselves render obedience to any resolution which might be taken. Upon their answering in the affirmative, they came to the conclusion that some excise upon commodities, beer or wine to begin with, would be necessary. And yet how was it to be done? Persuasion, it was generally recognised, would be of no avail. Any attempt to impose the new taxes by force would be met by an appeal to the courts of law, and the courts of law were certain to decide against the Crown. The only resort would be to a proclamation the contravention of which would be punishable in the Star Chamber.

Proposed excise.

[1] *Contarini's Despatch*, Jan. $\frac{1}{11}$.

[2] This debate in the Council is from a paper which was used by Hallam (*Hargrave MSS.*, 321, p. 300). It is a modern copy taken by some one who could not properly read the original, and is in some parts unintelligible. Its date is not given; but from a statement in *Contarini's Despatch* last quoted, that the Council had been occupied with schemes for laying impositions on commodities, I have no doubt that the discussion took place in the last week of the year. At all events, as the King's last words show, it must have been before Jan. 30.

CHAP. XVI.

1627. Dec.

It would be interesting to know from whom the last recommendation proceeded. But the brief notes which alone have reached us are silent on this head. Whoever the bold man may have been, the King felt himself called upon once more to justify so unheard-of a proceeding. "If there were any other way," he said, "I would tarry for your advices. I can find no other real way. For the particulars, I have thought of some. If you can find any easier, I will hearken to it. To call a Parliament, the occasion will not let me tarry so long."

Was it really only the want of time which hindered the calling of a Parliament? At all events the courtiers were bound to believe that it was so. When the King proceeded to support the plan for an imposition upon beer and wine, they all assented to the wisdom of the proposal. Suffolk, Laud, and Weston agreed that something of the kind must be done. Buckingham spoke at greater length. In obedience to Charles he had by this time abandoned the idea of a Parliament. "Had you not spent all your own means," he is reported to have said, addressing the King, "and yet your friends lost, I would not have advised this way. But being raised to defend religion, your kingdoms, and your friends, I see no other way but this. Neighbour kings are now beyond you in revenue . . . therefore, not I, but necessity of affairs." The army, he went on to say, would require 200,000*l.*, and 300,000*l.* would be needed for the navy. The army would be kept at home as a standing force of 11,000 men, in readiness to be employed in the relief of Rochelle or of the King of Denmark, as the case might require. To this demand for an army, apart from any expeditionary force to be actually employed for a definite purpose, all who spoke, with the single exception of Sir John

A standing force proposed.

CHAP. XVI.

1627. Dec.

Suckling, gave their approbation. On December 29 it was formally resolved that a fleet of 100 sail should be got ready in the ensuing summer.[1] As a military measure it would be an admirable precaution to have a standing depôt at home. But what would be its effect upon the civil constitution? Were the armed men, in the intervals of fighting at Rochelle or in Denmark, to force the new taxes upon England in defiance of courts of law and universal indignation?[2]

1628. Jan. German horse sent for.

Nor was this the only danger. Dulbier, now Buckingham's chief military adviser, was to be sent over to Germany with Sir William Balfour to levy a thousand German horse, who were to form the cavalry of this force. It would probably be hard to convince those who heard the news that nothing more but a mere measure of military precaution was intended. That Dulbier's horsemen were intended as a threat to the English opponents of the Government was a belief which has been frequently adopted by modern writers. But, after all, there is one circumstance which militates against this interpretation. Already, on December 29, the King had declared his intention of reviewing the cavalry of the militia of the ten counties nearest London;[3] and it seems incredible that if Charles had really intended to suppress resistance by the sword, he

[1] *Council Register*, Dec. 29.

[2] Conway to the Clerk of the Signet, Jan. 14; *S. P. Dom.*, xc. 80. The last suspicion was strongly entertained by Contarini in his despatch of $\frac{\text{Jan. 28}}{\text{Feb 7}}$. Mr. Forster (*Sir J. Eliot*, i. 417) suggests they were intended to overawe the Parliament. But the arrangements were made before a Parliament was determined on. Still there may have been some eventual intention of this kind. Mr. Forster was aware that the order for the money for Balfour and Dulbier was signed on the 30th of January. But he does not seem to have noticed Conway's letter for its preparation as early as the 14th. That Dulbier's horsemen were to be Roman Catholics is a later invention. They were levied in North Germany, and were subsequently transferred to the army of Gustavus. Dulbier was taken prisoner by Tilly at New Brandenburg. Charles wrote in vain to request his liberation.

[3] *Council Register*, Dec. 20.

should think of calling out a body of armed men who, as drawn from a class whose possessions were larger than those of the foot militia, were hardly likely to stand by in silence whilst their countrymen were being trodden down by a handful of German horse. Probably, after all, nothing more was meant by Balfour and Dulbier's commission than met the eye. It would only be one more example of Charles's extreme ignorance of the people amongst whom he lived if he fancied that he could summon them to his defence at the same time that he was pressing them down with illegal taxation, and flaunting in their eyes the banners of his foreign mercenaries.

The deliberations of the Council about raising money dragged more slowly on than their deliberations about raising men. The more the subject was discussed the less easy it must have seemed to venture upon so flagrant a breach of the law as the scheme which had been mooted. Avowedly or tacitly the proposed excise was abandoned for a time. The next scheme which rose and died away was one to compel every parish to keep three armed men in readiness at its own cost, thus producing a force of rather more than 30,000 men. By the end of January the Council assembled daily. One plan after another was discussed, and some even took heart to maintain, in the face of the King and the Duke, that it would be better to withdraw altogether from the Continent, and to be content with maintaining a strong defence at home. No names are given, but the counsel is attributed to the Spanish faction, the old opponents of the war, of whom Weston was the sole remaining member of the Council, though he may possibly have been supported by other voices at such a time.[1]

The proposed excise abandoned.

[1] *Contarini's Despatches*, Jan. $\frac{10}{20}$, $\frac{20}{30}$, $\frac{\text{Jan. } 28}{\text{Feb. } 7}$.

CHAP. XVI.

1628. Jan.

Nor was this the only unpalatable advice to which Charles was compelled to listen. Those who were disinclined to withdraw altogether from interference with the Continent, told him plainly that the only alternative was a Parliament.[1] One obstacle, indeed, no longer stood in the way. On January 2 orders[2] had been given that the prison doors should be opened to those who had been confined for their refusal to pay the loan. Seventy-six persons in all, some imprisoned, some in banishment in different counties, were permitted to return home, but we may be certain that not one of the whole number felt the slightest gratitude for the word which had unbarred the doors which had been closed upon them by the decree of arbitrary power.

Release of the prisoners in confinement about the loan.

Jan. 25. Privy seals proposed.

On January 25 the King, who had not yet consented to summon Parliament, ordered a fresh issue of Privy seals, the old resource of the forced loan under another form. The next few days were spent in urging upon the unwilling Charles the necessity of calling a Parliament. The leading personages at Court[3]—their names have not reached us—gave their personal guarantee that no attempt should be made to renew the Duke's impeachment. At a late hour on the night of the 30th Charles gave way, and orders were given that writs should be issued for a new Parliament.[4]

Jan. 30. Parliament to meet.

Nothing, however, was further from Charles's intention than to place himself without conditions in the hands of the House of Commons. As sheriffs were chosen in November, it was too late to have recourse in January to the manœuvre which had been practised two years before; but various schemes were canvassed

[1] *Council Register*, Jan. 2.

[2] The King to the Council; the King to Worcester, Jan. 25; *S. P. Dom.*, xci. 52. *Docquet Book.*

[3] Pembroke, one would guess a likely man.

[4] The date, with the rest of the facts, I get from *Contarini's Despatch* of $\frac{\text{Jan. 31}}{\text{Feb. 10}}$. He is more likely to know than Mead, who gives Jan. 28.

CHAP. XVI.

1628. Jan.

for making the Lower House pliable. It is even said that a proclamation was thought of excluding all lawyers from a seat, and it was decided that any attempt to touch the Duke should be followed by an immediate dissolution. In that case the King would consider himself no longer bound by the laws and customs of the realm.[1]

Parliament was not even to be allowed the option of giving or refusing. It was to meet on March 17, and the fleet was to put to sea on the 1st. A scheme for levying subsidies before they were granted approved itself highly to Charles's mind. His fleets since 1625 had been largely composed of vessels demanded from the port-towns and the maritime counties. The idea of a universal ship-money to be levied from every county in England seemed to him to be merely a further extension of the old principle. On February 11 letters were issued to all the shires. The distress of the King of Denmark, the ruin of English commerce in Germany and the Baltic, the danger of Rochelle and the Protestant religion, and the possibility of invasion from France and Spain, were made the most of. It was asserted that the fleet must go to sea before Parliament could meet, and it was stated that if the money were paid at once the King would go on with the Parliament; if not, he would think of some other way. The sum assessed upon each county must be levied and paid into the Exchequer by March 1. The whole sum demanded in England was 173,000*l.*[2] On the 15th the clergy were ordered to pay 20,000*l.* as a free gift.[3]

Feb. 11. Ship-money to be collected.

A few days brought wiser counsels. Lord Northampton, when he made the unheard-of demand in

[1] *Contarini's Despatch*, $\frac{\text{Jan. 21}}{\text{Feb. 10}}$.

[2] The King to the Sheriffs of Anglesea, Feb. 11; List of the sums levied on the counties [Feb. 11]; *S. P. Dom.*, xcii. 88, 93.

[3] The King to Archbishop Abbot, Feb. 15; *S. P. Dom.*, xciii. 39.

CHAP. XVI. 1628.

Warwickshire, of which county he was Lord Lieutenant, was told to his face that he had promised that the last loan should be repaid, and was asked how he could expect to draw more money from the subjects' purses. In Berkshire the Earl of Banbury, the honest Wallingford of James's reign, refused to raise his voice in favour of ship-money, on the ground that he had engaged if the loan were paid never to ask anything unparliamentary again. Such words were doubtless but samples of others uttered all over England. Charles swiftly drew back, revoked his letters, and hung up ship-money in the Royal armoury of projects to be used as occasion might require.[1]

Feb. The orders revoked.

Feb. 29. Commission for excise.

Charles, however, could not understand that the insuperable objection which his subjects appeared to entertain towards the payment of ship-money extended to all unparliamentary taxation whatever. On February 29 he issued a commission to the leading members of the Privy Council directing them to consider "all the best and speediest ways and means of raising money 'by impositions or otherwise' as they might think best 'in a case of this inevitable necessity, wherein form and circumstance must be dispensed with rather than the substance be lost or hazarded.'[2]

That Charles should have imagined it to be possible that he could raise money in such a matter is indeed strange. All that can be said is that he was in desperate straits. All the while that he was racking his brains Rochelle was perishing. Ever since November the city had been blockaded. A line of entrenchments cut it off from all communication with the country around, and the Cardinal, in the midst of the winter storms, restlessly superintended the erection of

The blockade of Rochelle.

[1] Beaulieu to Puckering, Feb. 20; Mead to Stuteville, Feb. 22; *Court and Times*, i. 322, 324.

[2] Commission, Feb. 29. *Parl. Hist.* ii. 417.

two vast piers projecting from either side of the long harbour to bar the passage of succours from without. The Rochellese, bold seamen as they were, had not force enough to resist the Royal fleet. Their deputies reminded Charles that they had deprived themselves of provisions to supply Buckingham's wants, and Charles felt it a point of honour to restore the means of subsistance of which he had stripped them.

Denbigh at Plymouth.

Denbigh was to take command of the convoy which was to protect the store-ships laden with supplies for Rochelle. But the same causes which had hindered Holland stood in the way of Denbigh's departure. The convoy was not ready, and the bread, beer, and cheese were spoiling in harbour.[1] On March 15 everything was in disorder. The ships needed repairs. Men ran away as soon as they were pressed. The 26th was talked of as the day on which all would be ready. But unless six hundred men could be pressed and kept from deserting, the fleet could not sail.[2]

March 8.

On land matters were as bad. At Banbury, encouraged perhaps by the near neighbourhood of Lord Saye, men refused to contribute to the billeting of the soldiers. In Dorsetshire, when the promised payments from the Exchequer were not forthcoming, the men were turned out of doors to steal or starve.[3] It might be feared that unless money could be found speedily, all England would be in an uproar.

All this while the elections were going on, and with a few rare exceptions they went against the Crown. Those who had refused the loan were sure of seats. The House when it met would be as stern in its opposition to illegal measures as the Parliament of 1626.

[1] Burlamachi to Conway, Feb. [?]; *S. P. Dom.*, xciv. 103.

[2] Denbigh to Buckingham, March 15; Manwaring to Buckingham, March 16; *S. P. Dom.*, xcvi. 3, 11.

[3] Banbury to Manchester, Feb. 28; Deputy Lieutenants of Dorsetshire to Suffolk, March 1; *S. P. Dom.*, xciv. 73, xcv. 8.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE THIRD PARLIAMENT OF CHARLES I.—THE LEADERSHIP OF SIR THOMAS WENTWORTH.

CHAP. XVII.

1628.

March 17. Laud's sermon.

On March 17 the Houses met. The sermon was preached by Laud on the text, "Endeavour to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." The tone of the sermon was somewhat plaintive. Three years before he had set forth, in the presence of the first Parliament of the reign, his theory of the constitution.[1] The King was to do judgment and justice; the Parliament, by its knowledge of all that was passing in the realm, was to give him information which would enable him to govern with full understanding. But the hope that this would be a picture of Charles's reign had turned out to be a dream, and the preacher had no other explanation to give than in the evils of distraction and discord against which he warned his hearers.[2]

The meeting of the leaders of the Commons.

It never entered into Laud's head that he was doing his best to foment the distraction and discord which he deplored, by teaching Charles the lesson which he was already too prone to learn, that he had nothing but information to look for from his subjects. The events of the past year had brought the King's authority in question in a way in which it had not been brought in question before. A few days before the opening of

[1] See p. 170.

[2] *Laud's Works*, i. 149.

CHAP. XVII.

1628. March.

the session a meeting of the leading members of the House of Commons had been held at the house of Sir Robert Cotton. There was a general feeling that the attack upon Buckingham should not be repeated, and Eliot, who was of the contrary opinion, withdrew his opposition in the face of the general sentiment, reserving his right to revert to his original position at some future time. To the others it was becoming clear, notwithstanding their reluctance to face the truth, that the main struggle was with the King and not with Buckingham. The gravity of the situation impressed itself on their minds. A whole range of questions opened up before them, every one of them possibly leading to a complete dislocation of the relations existing between the King and his people. Coke and Phelips, Wentworth and Selden, concurred in the opinion that the violated rights of the subject must first be vindicated. The very being of the commonwealth, they declared, was at stake.[1]

March 17. The King's speech.

If there had been any doubt before of the difficulty of the work to which the new Parliament had to address itself, there could be none after the King's speech was delivered. Charles seemed determined to console himself for the unpleasant necessity of calling Parliament at all by treating the Houses with studied rudeness. He at least did not 'endeavour to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.' He had called his subjects together, he said, in order that means might be provided to meet the common danger. If they failed to do their duty in this, he must, in discharge of his conscience, use those other means which God had put in his hands. They were not to take this as a threat, 'for he scorned to threaten any but his equals.' But he wished them to understand that though he was

[1] Forster, *Sir J. Eliot*, ii. 1.

CHAP. XVII.

1628.

ready to forget their distractions in the last Parliament, he expected them to alter their conduct.[1]

March 17. Certain Peers absent.

This time there had been no attempt to exclude any one from the House of Commons. But in spite of all that had been said and done in the last Parliament, when the Lords took their seats Abbot and Williams, Arundel, Bristol, and Lincoln were absent from their places. The Peers quickly called the roll of the House, and instituted enquiry into the reasons of their absence. In a few days the missing members took their places without further hindrance. Since the last Parliament every one of the five had suffered much from the Government. Abbot had been suspended from the exercise of his functions; Williams had been kept in banishment in his diocese; Arundel had been placed under restraint, nominally for his part in his son's marriage, in reality, it would seem, as an opponent of the warlike policy of the Court; Lincoln had resisted the loan, and had been sent to the Tower. Bristol had been summoned before the Star Chamber to answer to the charges which Charles had been driven to bring against him in the last session. But he had fallen seriously ill, and his illness had been taken as an excuse for postponing the prosecution indefinitely. It is hardly likely that it was more than an excuse. Bristol professed his readiness to produce the private correspondence relating to the journey to Madrid, and it would scarcely be pleasant to Charles to see that mystery laid open, even before a Court so devoted as the Star Chamber.[2]

Bristol's Star Chamber prosecution.

The ability and tact of Bristol alone might make a great difference to the Government if its fortune ever came to depend on the opinion of the Upper House. For the present the main interest was in the Commons.

[1] *Lords' Journals*, iii. 687.

[2] Interrogatories to Porter. *Sherborne MSS.*

CHAP. XVII. 1628.

The root of the evils complained of lay in the King's claim to withdraw from the cognizance of the Judges all cases of imprisonment by his own command. If Charles could be deprived of the assumed right of punishing offenders against his will, it would matter little what commands he might choose to give. He might ask for loans and taxes as he pleased. No one would be the worse, if the Judges invariably liberated persons committed to prison for refusing to comply with his illegal requirements. Such at least seems to have been Coke's opinion. On the 21st he brought in a Bill providing that, except by the sentence of a Court, no person should be detained untried in prison for more than two months if he could find bail, or for more than three months if he could not.[1]

March 17.

March 21. Coke's Bill on imprisonment.

Whether Coke intended by this Bill to meet all the difficulties of the case we cannot tell, but it was certain that the burning indignation which was in men's hearts would soon find expression in a more sweeping form. The next day something was said about supply. "If his Majesty," said Seymour, "shall be persuaded to take what he will, what need we to give?" Sermons had been preached to persuade the people that all they had was the King's. The question of supply was one to be discussed seriously in Committee.[2]

March 22. Seymour on supply.

In vain Edmondes and May, on the part of the Government, pleaded that the House should forget and forgive. In a speech of wondrous power and comprehensiveness, Eliot drew a lively picture of the past misgovernment. It was no question, he told his hearers,

Eliot declares against arbitrary taxation,

[1] *Harl. MSS.*, 4771, fol. 15. *Nicholas's Notes.*

[2] This debate is not given by Nicholas. I have adopted the order of speeches in the *Harl. MS.*, which is confirmed by Phelips, who at the end of the debate referred to the principal speeches in the same order as that given above. The ordinary arrangement, which is adopted by Mr. Forster, is, I believe, quite wrong.

CHAP. XVII.

1628. March 22.

whether they would forget and forgive. The question at issue was the very existence of the ancient laws and liberties of England. If these laws were set aside, all right of property was at an end. "It falls," he said, "into the old chaos and confusion, the will and pleasure of the mightier powers." It was no mere question of money, no mere temporary breach of the law under pressure of necessity, which might be considered as being of no more consequence than any other accident. "Yes," he cried, "it is of more; more than is pretended; more than can be uttered. Upon this dispute not alone our lands and goods are engaged, but all that we call ours. These rights, these privileges, which made our fathers freemen, are in question. If they be not now the more carefully preserved, they will I fear render us to posterity less free, less worthy than our fathers. For this particular admits a power to antiquate the laws. It gives leave to the State"—the Government, as we should now say—"besides the Parliament, to annihilate or decline any Act of Parliament; and that which is done in one thing, or at one time, may be done in more or oftener."

and speaks of the state of religion.

All the evil, the great orator went on to say, sprung from the danger of innovation in religion. Favour had been shown within the Church to those who were most in unison with Rome, and even to Rome itself. No man in England had any interest in attacking the ancient liberties of the kingdom 'but that false party in religion which to their Romish idol sacrifice all other interests and respects.' There was a danger therefore in 'the habit of disregarding and violating laws.' "Apply to religion," said Eliot, "what has been propounded as to moneys exacted for the loan. We possess laws providing first in general against all forms of innovation, and also careful in particular to prevent

1628. March 22.

the practice of our enemies by exclusion of their instruments, by restraining of their proselytes, by restricting their ceremonies, by abolishing their sorceries. Sir, while these laws continue, while they retain their power and operation, it is impossible but that we should in this point be safe. Without that change also in our policy by which law is set at nought, there could not be an innovation in religion."

The attack upon the liberties of the subject, and the attack upon the religion of the nation, was in reality, he argued, an attack upon the King. To discuss these matters was the truest service to the King, and the whole complicated subject should be referred in its several divisions to the Committees of the House.[1]

Rudyerd preaches union.

Rudyerd followed, in his feeble way, trying to reconcile things that could not be reconciled. The danger of the kingdom was great; the danger of offending the King was also great. It was the crisis of Parliaments, by which men would know whether parliaments would live or die. "Men and brethren," he said in his distraction, "what shall we do? Is there no balm in Gilead?" On the whole, he thought the best thing would be to vote a large sum of money, and then to ask the King to set everything straight that had gone wrong.

Went-worth's view of the situation.

Rudyerd was succeeded by a speaker of a different order. The business of Parliament, said Wentworth, was to produce union between the King and his people. Both had been injured by past evils. Both were interested in finding a remedy for those evils. "The illegal ways," he exclaimed, "are punishments and marks of indignation. The raising of loans strength-

[1] Forster, *Sir J. Eliot*, ii. 8. Mr. Forster gives an abstract of the part of his speech which referred to Laud and the High Church clergy. It is a pity that he has not given us Eliot's own words.

CHAP. XVII.

1628. March 22.

ened by commissions with unheard-of instructions and oaths, the billeting of soldiers by the lieutenants and deputy-lieutenants, have been as though they could have persuaded Christian princes, nay worlds, that the right of empire had been to take away by strong hand, and they have endeavoured, as far as was possible for them, to do it. This hath not been done by the King, under the pleasing shade of whose crown I hope we shall rather gather the fruits of justice, but by projectors. They have extended the prerogative of the King beyond its just symmetry, which makes the sweet harmony of the whole. They have rent from us the light of our eyes, inforced a company of guests worse than the ordinances of France, vitiated our wives and daughters before our faces, brought the Crown to greater want than ever it was by anticipating the revenue. And can the shepherd be thus smitten and the flock not be scattered? They have introduced a privy council,[1] ravishing at once the spheres of all ancient government, imprisoning us without banks or bounds.[2] They have taken from us—What shall I say? Indeed, what have they left us? They have taken from us all means of supplying the King and ingratiating ourselves with him by tearing up the roots of all property; which, if they be not seasonably set into the ground by his Majesty's hand, we shall have, instead of beauty, baldness. To the making of all these whole I shall apply myself, and propound a remedy to all these diseases. By one and the same thing hath the King and people been hurt, and by the same must they be cured.[3] To vindicate what? New

[1] A reference to the secret councils of Buckingham and his friends.

[2] This is the reading of some MS. authorities. The ordinary 'bail and bond' is probably the corruption of a prosaic copyist.

[3] There seems to be something omitted here, but I have been unable to recover it.

things? No. Our ancient, sober, and vital liberties, by reinforcing of the ancient laws of our ancestors; by setting such a stamp upon them as no licentious spirit shall dare hereafter to enter upon them. And shall we think this a way to break a Parliament. No, —our desires are modest and just. I speak truly, both for the interest of the King and people. If we enjoy not these, it will be impossible to relieve him."

Comparison between Wentworth and Eliot.

Wentworth and Eliot were heartily at one in denouncing the evils of the times. But the difference between the modes in which the two men regarded the grievances of the nation was ominous of coming division between them. Wentworth had nothing to say about religion, nothing to say about the large constitutional groundwork on which Eliot founded his conclusions. Both were loyal to King and Parliament alike. But whilst Eliot is thinking chiefly of Parliament as the mirror of the national will and the guardian of ancient law, Wentworth is thinking chiefly how the King's government is to be carried on. With him the practical mischief is of more importance than all theoretical considerations, as throwing obstructions in the way of the true work of government, as well as in inflicting the most exasperating injuries upon the people. And different as were the points of view from which the events of the past year were regarded by the two men, the remedies which they proposed were no less different. Eliot would have had the whole state of the nation discussed in Committee; Wentworth, having very little confidence in Committees, and very great confidence in himself, stepped forward to offer his own guidance to the House. There must, he said in conclusion, be no more illegal imprisonment, no more compulsory employments abroad, no forced loans, no billeting of soldiers without the assent of the householder.

Wentworth's remedies.

CHAP. XVII.

1628. March 22.

In a few short words Wentworth had laid the foundation of the great statute, which afterwards assumed the form of the Petition of Right. A condemnation of martial law was afterwards added. But if Coke was finally to give to it its form, Wentworth was the originator of its substance.

Speeches of Phelips and Coke.

The debate still rolled on for some little time. Phelips did his best to reinforce Eliot's argument by protesting against the sermons of Sibthorpe and Manwaring.[1] Coke, on the other hand, seems to have been unwilling to go as far as Wentworth. He was not able, he said, in allusion to the words of Phelips, "to fly at all grievances, but only at loans." He recommended that subsidies should at once be granted, but that a statement of the illegality of the late loan should be inserted in the preamble of the Bill. In reply Secretary Coke made an admission most damaging to the King. He could not deny he said, in pressing for an immediate supply, that the law had been broken, but he could say that it had been broken under necessity. It would not be very long before Sir John's acknowledgment that the law had been broken would be thrown in his teeth as a complete abandonment of the case set up by the King.

In the end Sir Henry Mildmay suggested that nothing should be done hastily. The King should have time given him to consider what had been said.

March 24. The King's reception of the demands.

Charles's wisest course would evidently have been to close promptly with Wentworth. But he did not understand that Wentworth's demand was the measure of the House's determination. As in 1625 he had agreed to persecute the Catholics in order to persuade

[1] Phelips's speech is curious as enouncing, in opposition to Manwaring, a doctrine which afterwards became famous. "It is well known," he said, "the people of this state are under no other subjection than what they did voluntarily assent unto by their original contract between king and people."

the Commons to give him money to send out the fleet to Cadiz, so it should be now. Eliot and Phelips should learn that against the Catholics at least they had the King upon their side.

Such would appear to be the explanation of the next move of Secretary Coke. On the 24th he asked the House to take the question of supply into immediate consideration. Afterwards his Majesty would be ready to redress all grievances. Sir John had something more to say. A few days before the meeting of Parliament a discovery had been made that a house at Clerkenwell, belonging to the Earl of Shrewsbury, was being used by a small party of Jesuits as a place of meeting. The Jesuits were at once arrested and their goods and papers seized. As there was nothing treasonable in the papers, some clever scoundrel[1] thought fit to forge a letter from one of the community, in which it was told how the Jesuits had a

The Jesuits at Clerkenwell.

[1] The whole story is told by Mr. J. G. Nichols in the *Camden Miscellany*, vols. ii. and iv. Sir J. Maynard seems to have had something to do with the forgery, if he was not himself the forger. Mr. Nichols printed at the same time a curious letter from the Council to Falkland which he held to be a forgery also. But the grounds he alleged were manifestly insufficient. He argued in the first place that the letter had an impossible date. This would be worth attending to if we had the original. But the hasty copy which is all we have may easily have substituted the 2nd for the 22nd of March. Mr. Nichols's second argument is that the letter is signed by Suffolk, Salisbury, Morton, and Durham. The latter, he said, if meant for the Bishop of Durham, would scarcely have come last. But surely Earls would come before Bishops. "Morton," too, he argued, "is a name not familiar to the history of the period." He was, however, a Privy Councillor, being the Scotch Earl who commanded the reinforcement which was to have joined Buckingham at Rhé. The letter is very characteristic of Buckingham's off-hand way of treating serious matters. I incline to think it genuine. I may add that the last letter I ever wrote to Mr. Nichols was to call his attention to these points, being unaware at the time of his illness. Those who had the good fortune to know him, will be sure that, if he had been convinced by its arguments, he would have accepted the correction with pleasure. Truth was the one thing which he cared for in his investigations.

CHAP. XVII.

1628. March 24.

plot on hand for keeping alive the quarrel between Buckingham and the House of Commons, and the forged letter was widely circulated. Buckingham, when he saw it, was highly offended, as the unskilful forger had allowed expressions about Dulbier's horse to slip in which might be more damaging to him than to the Jesuits.

Neither Buckingham nor Charles, in fact, cared to protect the Catholics,[1] and they may very likely have instructed the Secretary to make the most of the Jesuits at Clerkenwell. But Sir John had not the light hand which was needed to deal with the discovery so as to make a good impression. "You little think," he said, "there was another pretended parliament of Jesuits, and other well-willers to that party, within a mile of this place." But the House was not to be frightened with this bugbear. Not one of the speakers who followed even referred to the terrible portent. There was much sharp speaking about the Arminian divines, and the House gave it to be understood that it meant to discuss its grievances before doing anything about supply.[2]

Sir J. Coke tries to frighten the House.

Grievances to precede supply.

March 25. Necessities of the Government.

This was a bitter pill for Charles. Denbigh's mournful letters were pouring in day by day to plead for the necessities of his charge. The council of war too had just sent in an estimate of little less than 600,000*l.* for the military and naval service of the coming year, besides an immediate demand for nearly 700,000*l.* for repairs and munitions of war.[3] Charles

[1] The Northern Commission, of which the Earl of Sunderland was the nominal chief and Sir J. Savile the acting head, was, I fancy, intended simply to get money. By taking less than the fines directly from the recusants, a whole set of informers would be discountenanced, and more money come actually to the Crown. See the Commission, June 23, 1627; *Patent Rolls*, 3 Charles I., Part 35, No. 7. The affair, however, seems to have been mismanaged.

[2] *Harl. MSS.*, 4771, fol. 24.

[3] Estimate, March 22; *S. P. Dom.*, xcviii. 1. It is one of the few

CHAP. XVII.

1628. March 25.

was thus in much the same difficulty as he had been in in 1625. If he asked for all that he wanted, he would get a refusal. If he asked for less, the service would be starved. The course adopted was to lay before the House the heads of expenditure, without any mention of the sums required for each.

On Charles's request the Committee ordered to consider both grievances and supply.

On points of form the Commons were not willing to contend with the King. At the urgent entreaty of Secretary Coke, they resolved that the Grand Committee which was to discuss grievances should also discuss supply. But it soon appeared that Charles had gained but little. As soon as the House had gone into Committee, speaker after speaker announced his full belief that their property in their goods and the liberty of their persons must be placed beyond dispute before it would be fit to mention supply. Phelips, with his usual proneness to seize upon questions which were not yet ripe for solution, even asked what was the use of ascertaining the law if the Judges could expound it as they pleased.

Debate in Committee on the liberty of the subject.

The King almost without support in the Commons.

It was but the natural result of Charles's system of government that he was as ill-served in the House of Commons as he was everywhere else. To Eliot and Wentworth and Phelips he had nobody to oppose but Secretary Coke. May and Edmondes contented themselves with general exhortations to concord; and Weston, who, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, had no love for the war expenditure for which he was expected to provide, sat silent by their side. To the great lawyers of the opposition, with Coke and Selden at their head, there was no one to reply except the Solicitor-General, and Shilton was an example how easily incompetency could float to the surface when

important errors in Mr. Bruce's *Calendar* that he overlooked the first of these demands, and so under-estimated the whole sum required.

CHAP. XVII.
1628.
March 25.

buoyed up by Royal favour. When Shilton rose it was only to say that he had not been present when the case of the *habeas corpus* was argued in the King's Bench, but that if they would give him time to consult Heath, he would see what Heath had to say about the matter.

Coke's statement of the law.

Shilton's verbal admission of his own incompetence brought up Sir Edward Coke. The old lawyer contemptuously replied that he too would be glad to know what the Attorney-General had to say. In the meanwhile, he had something worth his consideration to tell him. Whenever the old law-books spoke of the King's imprisoning a man, they meant that the King's command was signified through his Judges. "The King," said Coke, "can arrest no man, because there is no remedy against him." He then produced a precedent from the reign of Edward III., according to which a committal without cause named had been deemed insufficient by the Judges. Scripture too was on his side. Had not Festus said to Agrippa, 'It seemeth to me unreasonable to send a prisoner, and not withal to signify the crimes laid to his charge?' Coke ended by saying that he had given the Attorney-General a preparative. But he had more physic in store for him.

Coke's argument was another warning to Charles to close with Wentworth quickly. If Eliot would have placed the direction of affairs in the hands of the House of Commons, Coke would have placed the final decision upon them in the hands of the Judges. But the question asked by Phelips earlier in the day had to be answered in favour of the Judges before they could be considered competent to the task assigned them.

But as Charles made no sign, the Commons stepped

1628.

boldly forward. They refused even to consider the Secretary's heads of expenditure for the present. They passed a resolution condemnatory of taxation without a Parliamentary grant. But the question of imprisonment was not so easily settled. There was something to be said on the side of the King. In ordinary times it might be all very well that the King should not imprison without showing cause, and that the Judges should be called upon at once to decide whether the accused person should be admitted to bail or kept in prison. But would not this be dangerous in extraordinary times? In the last two reigns there had been grave conspiracies affecting the well-being of the whole nation. There had been a plot to assassinate Elizabeth, a plot to blow up King, Lords, and Commons with gunpowder. "I will put my case," said Nethersole, in evident allusion to the position of Northumberland in connection with the Gunpowder Plot. "There is amongst us a great party of Jesuits and priests, and the scholars of Jesuits are about to question the King's title to the Crown; and suppose some friends of some one great man and allied to the Crown, do conspire against the King and Crown. Now, to keep that great man out of danger, they never acquaint him with the plot. Will not all men confess that a warrant in this case is both lawful and necessary to secure this great man? And what reason of his imprisonment can be added?"

March 26. Resolution on taxation.

March 28.

Nethersole's argument.

In the course of the debates which followed, this argument was put again and again in every possible form. It is childish to ignore its weight. The conclusion to which it points has been embodied in that unwritten constitution under which Englishmen are content to live. In ordinary times the rule which Coke advocated suffices. But when any extraordinary

Estimate of its force.

CHAP. XVII.

1628. March 28.

commotion makes itself felt in the depths of society, when some great conspiracy is on foot, the ministry of the day comes to Parliament for a suspension of the *Habeas Corpus* Act, and arbitrary committals find no impediment.

No complete solution then possible.

There are occasions on which the historian has to acknowledge that no complete solution of existing difficulties was possible at the time. Practically the great evil of the day was that Charles was not fit to be entrusted with powers which had been wielded by former sovereigns. He had acted as if there had been an emergency, when, if there was an emergency at all, it was one of his own creation. Even if the leaders of the Commons had looked fairly into Nethersole's argument, all that they could have said was that, by some possible rearrangement of the constitution, by some form of government hitherto untried, that which he asked for might beneficially be granted. Sufficient for the day was the evil thereof. The Commons had come to consider that it was more important for them to bind the King's hands than to arm them against conspiracies which, in their time at least, had no existence except in the fertile imagination of Secretary Coke.

The legal question.

The legal aspect of the question was by this time coming to the front. It was in vain for Eliot to appeal to the high position of Parliament as the interpreter of the national conscience, in vain for Wentworth to lay the foundations of a new settlement in an intelligent perception of the requirements of the State, if Charles refused to take account of their demands. It remained for the great legal authorities of the Commons to lay down the law as it stood, to trace out the long tradition of legality which in the course of ages had raised a barrier against arbitrary power.

CHAP. XVII.

1628. March 28.

That the barrier thus raised had not always been firmly maintained it is impossible to deny. Precedents were not always consistent, and the weak side of the legal argument was that it attempted to reduce the fluctuations of social forces to a uniform system, and to account for the constitution of England in the Middle Ages without mentioning those revolutionary disturbances which were the supplement of the decisions of the Judges.

March 29. Coke and Shilton.

In the Commons Coke had no adversary worthy of his steel. Yet even Shilton contrived to embarrass him for the moment by producing a resolution of the King's Bench in 1615, in which Coke himself expressed approval of the doctrine that when the Council sent a man to prison the cause of the imprisonment need not be disclosed. At the same time Shilton quoted the opinion of Chief Justice Anderson, to which Heath had referred triumphantly in Westminster Hall.

Even Coke was for once disconcerted by the attack. The report, he said, was not yet twenty-one years old. Then floundering still more deeply in the mire, and forgetting dates and everything else in his confusion, he began talking wildly of the necessity of dealing strictly at that time with the traitors concerned in the Gunpowder Plot, as if, in 1615, every one of them who had fallen into the hands of the Government had not been executed nearly nine years before.

It was a fine opportunity for Shilton. "What!" he might have said, "do you really hold that in times such as that of the Gunpowder Plot, the strict law for which you are pleading cannot be executed?" But Shilton was no debater, and he sat silent. Wentworth came to Coke's rescue with a few sarcastic words. "Mr. Solicitor," he said, "hath done that

CHAP. XVII.

1628.

which belongs to his place, but not so ingeniously as he might." [1]

March 31. Coke's justification.

Two days later Coke was himself again. He had the right, he said, of changing his opinion when his knowledge was increased. Since he signed the resolution referred to, he had seen members of Parliament imprisoned. He had himself only just escaped imprisonment. He had gone to his law-books, and there he had found that the boasted resolution of Anderson and the Judges of his day was apocryphal. Anderson's words were very different from those which had been cited in Court.

Coke had risen above the weakness which led him to claim infallibility in matters of law. "I cannot think of flattery," said Eliot, "but we may here thank him now whom posterity will hereafter commend." [2] Eliot in fact had a great part in the old lawyer's triumph. A report of Anderson's resolution in his own handwriting had been treasured up as a precious possession by his heirs. They now sought out Eliot and placed the manuscript in his hands. On the morning of April 1 Eliot laid it before a Committee of the House. If it was not by any means so explicit as the popular lawyers would have drawn it, it was more in their favour than the note which had been cited by Heath.[3] Coke interpreted the words entirely as he wished them to be interpreted. The old man was more than triumphant. "Of my own knowledge," he

April 1. Anderson's judgment produced.

[1] *Harl. MSS.*, 4771, 45 b. The word is "ingeniously," which in those days bore the signification of "ingenuously" as well as that of "ingeniously." Probably Wentworth meant to reflect on Shilton's want of skill. The *Harl. MS.* gives the only satisfactory account of the affair.

[2] *Harl. MSS.*, 4771, fol. 46 b; Coke's speech has a wrong date in *State Trials*, iii. 82.

[3] "And where it pleased your Lordships to will divers of us to set down in what cases a person sent to custody by her Majesty, her Council some one or two of them, are to be detained in prison and not delivered

1628. April 1.

said, "this book was written with my Lord Anderson's own hand. It is no flying report of a young student. I was Solicitor then, and Treasurer Burghley was as much against commitment as any of this kingdom. Let us draw towards a conclusion. The question is, Whether a freeman can be imprisoned by the King without setting down the cause? I leave it as bare as Æsop's crow, they that argue against it." [1]

Resolutions on imprisonment.

Coke's appeal to Anderson's opinion swept everything before it. In three resolutions the Committee

by her Majesty's Courts or Judges, we think that if any person be committed by her Majesty's commandment from her person, or by order from the Council Board, or if any one or two of her Council commit one for high treason, such persons, so in the case before committed, may not be delivered by any of her Courts without due trial by the law and judgment of acquittal had. Nevertheless the Judges may award the Queen's writ to bring the bodies of such prisoners before them; and if upon return thereof the causes of their commitment be certified to the Judges, as it ought to be, then the Judges in the cases before ought not to deliver him, but to remand him to the place from whence he came, which cannot be conveniently done unless notice of the cause in generality or else specially be given to the keeper or gaoler that shall have the custody of such prisoner." *Anderson's Reports*, i. 298. Upon this, *Hallam*, i. 386, observes: "For though this is not grammatically worded, it seems impossible to doubt that it acknowledges the special command of the King, or the authority of the Privy Council as a body, to be such sufficient warrant for a commitment as to require no further cause to be expressed, and to prevent the Judges from discharging the party from custody either absolutely or upon bail." The consequence, he goes on to say, would be to render every statute by which the liberties of Englishmen were protected, a dead letter. The effect of Anderson's report depends on whether he meant 'the cause in generality' to apply merely to the order of the Queen or Privy Council, or to some general statement of the offence committed. In any case, however, Anderson seems to have had in view a trial before the King's Bench as the proper result, and to have been thinking rather of saying that bail ought to be refused to persons so committed, till the time for trial came on, than of the further question whether they could be kept back entirely or for any long time from the jurisdiction of the Court. Anderson's assertion that the cause of commitment ought to be certified, would be the part of the report on which the Commons would probably lay stress.

[1] There is some difficulty about the speech (*State Trials*, iii. 76). Part of it, *Humores moti*, &c., occurs in a speech of the 29th, and the rest is not mentioned by Nicholas or in the Harleian MSS. But it can hardly have been spoken except on the production of Anderson's original MS.

CHAP. XVII.

1628. April 1.

unanimously resolved that no freeman might be committed without cause shown; that every one, however committed, had a right to a writ of *habeas corpus*; and that if no legal cause of imprisonment appeared, he was to be delivered or bailed.

The three resolutions on imprisonment, together with the resolution on taxation, constituted the main part of the case of the Commons on the liberty of the subject. The day before, the King had accorded a gracious reception to the joint petition of the two Houses for the strict execution of the Recusancy laws.[1] On April 2 the Commons took into consideration the heads of expenditure presented on behalf of the King. The general opinion was that provision should be made for the defence of the kingdom, but that no encouragement should be given to Charles to launch out into another of those great expeditions which had hitherto ended in such disastrous failure. Sir John Coke indeed argued that attack was often the best defence. It might be so, retorted Eliot, but attacks conducted after the fashion of the late attempts upon Cadiz and Rhé could defend nobody. "Consider," he said, "in what case we are, if on the like occasion, or with the like instruments, we shall again adventure another expedition. It was ever the wisdom of our ancestors here to leave foreign wars wholly to the State, and not to meddle with them. There may be some necessity for a war offensive, but, looking on our late disasters, I tremble to think of sending more abroad."[2] Wentworth took a course of his own. He would have nothing to say to Eliot's investigations into the past. "I will not fall," he said, "into the deep of foreign actions, but address myself to particulars. I cannot for-

April 2. Debate on supply.

Eliot's objections.

Course recommended by Wentworth.

[1] *Parl. Hist.*, ii. 248.

[2] Forster, *Sir J. Eliot*, ii. 22.

CHAP. XVII.
1628.
April 2.

get the duty I owe to my country, and unless we be secured in our liberties we cannot give." Wentworth recommended that there should be no attempt to enter upon the heads of expenditure. He also recommended that a bountiful supply should be given. But he reminded the Committee that the list of grievances was not yet exhausted, and that there was no security that, if money were voted, their grievances would be redressed. He therefore moved and carried the adjournment of the debate to the 4th. He held, in fact, that the House should not make itself responsible for the mode in which the money voted would be spent. He did not care enough for the war to think it worth while to enquire whether Rochelle was likely to be lost or saved. But he did care for the settlement of those domestic difficulties which made all healthy government impossible, and though, he was not likely to abet any movement which would have placed the House of Commons in direct opposition to the Crown, he was quite ready to use the refusal of subsidies as a lever to obtain that which he regarded as advantageous to the Crown and the Commons alike.

Resolution on confinement.

As the result of the adjournment the Committee betook itself to supplement its previous resolutions. The practice of confining a person obnoxious to the Court to his own house, or to the house of any other private person, which had been recently practised in the cases of Bristol and the refusers of the loan, was voted to be illegal.

Billeting soldiers.

But the warmest discussion arose on the billeting of soldiers and the malpractices connected with it. Eliot related, with striking effect, a circumstance of which he was cognisant. The house of a gentleman near Plymouth, he said, had been attacked by a band of soldiers, and he was himself forced to fly from their fury. A few days afterwards he was

CHAP. XVII. 1628. April 2.

recognised in Plymouth by his assailants, and assaulted by them. He complained to the Mayor, and was by him referred to the Commissioners appointed for the government of the troops. Not only did the Commissioners give him no redress, but they sent him and his servant to prison. "Little difference I see," said Eliot, "between these and the old Roman soldiers. Can this people give supply that are not masters of themselves?"

Complaint waxed louder and louder. "If we go on in particular," said Digges, "we shall never come to an end: It is too common for the commanders to deny all justice." Phelips said that the Deputy Lieutenants had no right to make rates for the maintenance of the soldiers. Yet there was something in the defence of Sir Edward Rodney, himself a Deputy Lieutenant. The soldiers, he said, came with empty stomachs and with arms in their hands. If the King's orders had not been obeyed, the men would have seized by force all that they wanted. It had always been the custom to levy money for the support of soldiers on the understanding that it would be repaid from the Exchequer. If the men had been billeted in private houses it was because no money had come down from the King to support them in inns.[1]

Question of authority opened up.

No money had come down. That was the gist of the whole grievance. And why had no money come down? Because, the King would say, the Commons, in neglect of their duty, had refused to vote it. The Commons held that it was because the King had engaged in an expenditure of which they were in the right in disapproving. Do what they would, the deep question of sovereignty—of the right of saying the last word when differences arose—was for ever cropping up.

[1] *Harl. MSS.*, 4771, fol. 51-57 b. *Nicholas's Notes.*

CHAP. XVII.

1628. April 3. Satisfaction expressed by the King.

The next morning a message was delivered from the King by Secretary Coke. His Majesty, he said, had heard that there were rumours that he was angry with what the House had been doing, and that Buckingham had spoken malicious words against the Parliament. He assured them that this was not the case. Sir John added that the King wished them to vote him a supply the next day, without any condition. He would then assure them that he had no intention of intrenching upon their liberties. Charles, in short, could not see that their liberties were at all in danger. "For God's sake," he had said, "why should any hinder them of their liberties? If they did, I should think they dealt not faithfully with me."

What did Charles mean?

There is no reason to accuse Charles of hypocrisy in these words. He did not yet fully understand where the struggle really lay. He had regarded the loan as an irregular expedient, forced upon him by the course taken by the Commons in the first two Parliaments of his reign, much as the King of Prussia regarded the unparliamentary budget arranged by himself before the campaign of 1866. Now that the Commons appeared likely to resume their proper functions, there would be no need for him to revert to such unusual proceedings. They would vote him the supplies which he needed, and he would assure them that he would not again put in force the extraordinary powers of which they complained. But he firmly believed that those extraordinary powers were part of the inheritance of the Crown, and he was resolved not to divest himself of them.

Question of pressing men for the army.

In the course of the day the four resolutions on imprisonment and taxation were formally reported to the House. The debate on forced employment on foreign service took an unexpected turn when Selden called

CHAP. XVII.

1628. April 3.

in question the existing system of pressing men for military and naval service which had grown up since the commencement of the Tudor reigns. Even Phelips was startled by the prospect which had been opened by Selden. Without compulsory service, he asked, how was an army to be maintained? Wentworth gave expression to the same doubt. If Selden was right, and the King had no power to press, the sooner the power was given to him the better. The only point to be considered was how such a power could be moderately exercised. On Wentworth's motion a Committee was appointed to consider the question.[1]

Wentworth's position.

The position thus taken up by Wentworth is significative. Above the question of Royal or Parliamentary authority, above the question of law and precedent, he kept ever steadily before him the necessity of an intelligent perception of the wants of the country. Parliaments might be merely the reflection of the interests and passions of an ignorant nation. Lawyers might appeal to the dry records of a dead past which could give no rule to the living present. But intelligence could not fail. The strength and the weakness of Wentworth lay in this doctrine, so true when intelligence takes account of the elements of passion and prejudice, zeal or sluggishness in the nation, so false when it deals with a people as mere brute matter, to be handled and directed as the man of wisdom thinks best.[2]

April 4. Separation of civil from the military grievances.

Wentworth's motion had at all events, by taking up the time of the House, made the completion of the list of grievances impossible for the present. And the next morning had been fixed for the debates on supply.

[1] *Harl. MSS.*, 4771, fol. 57 b, 2313, fol. 28.

[2] The modern idea of statesmanship, in fact, looks upon government as a *μαιευτικὴ τέχνη*. But the Socrates of politics was yet in the future in Wentworth's days.

It was accordingly resolved to suspend the consideration of the military grievances for the present, and to lay the four resolutions on taxation and imprisonment before the Lords.

Debate on supply.

Before the House went into Committee of Supply, a fresh message from the King came to give assurance that they should enjoy their liberties under him as fully as under the best of their former kings. The House was in a liberal mood. But there were many to whom the heads of expenditure seemed excessive, many too in whose minds they awakened memories of disaster and defeat. Wentworth recommended that the heads of expenditure should be quietly shelved. The House should grant a large supply, and ask no questions how it was to be employed. The recommendation had a marked success. Eliot said that he had intended to say something about the heads of expenditure, but that he had no wish to interpose any further delay. Wentworth's motion was carried, and the House was thus relieved from all responsibility for the prosecution of the war. What was given would be a free gift, binding no one for the future.

Five subsidies voted.

Then followed a discussion on the number of subsidies to be granted. Some said five, others less. Eliot, frightened at the excessive liberality of the House, moved the adjournment of the debate. Wentworth supported the largest grant suggested, and he had the House with him. Eliot protested in vain that so much could not be raised without the aid of military force. But he did not venture to appeal to a division, and five subsidies were unanimously voted.

Wentworth's leadership.

The leadership of the Commons was clearly in Wentworth's hands. He represented the desire of the majority of the members to carry conciliation to the utmost possible limits. But he also represented their

CHAP. XVII.

1628. April 4. The grant not to be reported.

desire to have a full and effective remedy for their grievances. As soon as the motion for the subsidies was carried, he proposed that no report of the vote should be made to the House. What had been done, he said, was done conditionally to the King's agreement to settle the fundamental liberties of the subject. The proposal thus made was practically if not formally adopted.[1] No report was made, and there was thus no official record that the subsidies had ever been voted at all. It would be impossible for Charles, if matters went ill, to levy the subsidies as he had attempted to do in 1626, on the ground that they had been offered by the House.

Charles's hopeful picture of an immediate grant of supply, followed by a vague declaration of his own intention to maintain the liberties of his subjects, was therefore not to be realised. It was by Wentworth's hand that the cup had been dashed from his lips. But Wentworth had no wish to reduce the Royal authority to a shadow. He had been one of the Committee which had unanimously recommended that the four resolutions should be laid before the House of Lords.[2] He may have thought that such a course was unavoidable under the circumstances, or he may have been unwilling to lose his influence by openly differing from the great lawyers of the House. But he had something more definite to propose. "He would," he said, "have the Grand Committee appoint a sub-committee to draw

Wentworth proposes a Bill on the liberties of the subject.

[1] There is a discrepancy in the authorities. The *Harleian MS.*, 4771 (60 b–63 b), ends with an order for a report. Nicholas gives the further speech noticed above, and then says, "The Speaker goeth unto the chair and the House riseth." Another *Harleian MS.*, 4313, fol. 34 b, gives the order for the report with Wentworth's speech following. As no report appears to have been made, there can be no doubt that the order was dropped on Wentworth's intervention, though it may not have been formally rescinded.

[2] *Commons' Journals*, i. 879.

1628. April 4.

into a law what may assure us of our liberty of our persons and property of our goods before we report the resolution of our gift."

Here then, at last, was Wentworth's scheme. Not a humble petition to the King, not a legal argument before the Peers to which they might refuse to agree, but a law to provide for the future was the true solution of the difficulty. Whatever might come of the great argument proposed, it would be certain to offend the King. He would have to be told that he had been utterly in the wrong, and that he had broken a whole series of laws from Magna Charta downwards. It might indeed prove that Charles was not to be conciliated, and then it might be necessary to go through all this. But Wentworth may well have thought that there was a better way. If once it became statute law that the King might not levy loans without the consent of Parliament, and that he might not imprison men without allowing them to seek their trial in open court, all the learning in the world about the constitution of England in the Middle Ages would be no more than an antiquarian investigation, more interesting to Englishmen but not more practically important than an enquiry into the laws of Solon or the procedure of the Roman prætors.

A Bill, moreover, would have the advantage in Wentworth's eyes of being capable of limitation. Nethersole's argument was not likely to pass unheeded by Wentworth, and he was sure to regard with special favour a mode of procedure by which it would be possible to consider not merely what the law was, but what the law ought to be.

April 7. The King pleased with the subsidies.

For the present, however, the lawyers had it all their own way. A day was fixed for their argument before the Lords. Even Charles was in high good

CHAP. XVII.

1628. April 7.

humour. He probably did not yet see how far the claims of the Lower House would reach, or he confided in the firmness of the Peers to reject anything which in his eyes was clearly unreasonable. The five subsidies had surpassed his expectations. "By how many voices was it carried?" he asked Secretary Coke, who brought the welcome news. Sir John could afford to jest, and replied, "By one." Then, having frightened the King for a moment, he explained that the Commons had voted with one voice and one assent.

Coke reports Buckingham's speech.

All this and more Coke garrulously reported to the House. But he had not the tact to be content with singing the praises of the King. He added that Buckingham had joined in a hope that the desires of the House would be granted. If the spirit which had animated the last Parliament was asleep it was not dead. Eliot sprang to his feet and protested against the mediation of a subject between King and Parliament. His words found an echo in the cries of "Well spoken, Sir John Eliot!" which arose on every side.[1]

The resolutions before the Lords.

That day brought knowledge to the King that more was meant by the Commons than he had hitherto supposed. Coke and Selden and Littleton laid the resolutions of the House before the Peers. Much new light had been thrown on the subject since the proceedings in the King's Bench, and the lawyers of the Commons made a strong case on behalf of the absolute illegality of committals without cause shown. The next day Heath commenced his argument on the other side, contending that the King had never relinquished the right of interfering with the ordinary jurisdiction of the Courts when the necessity of the State so required.

Charles sees the

Charles was beginning to open his eyes to the

[1] *Parl. Hist.*, ii. 274. Mead to Stuteville, April 12; *Court and Times*, i. 336.

magnitude of the issues at stake. It was something more than a mere question of the legality of this or that action. It was sovereignty itself, the right of deciding in the last resort, which he was required to abandon. He was ready to promise to levy no more loans or taxes without the consent of Parliament. He was ready to promise that in all ordinary imprisonments he would leave the decision to the Judges. But he was not ready to promise that, in questions in which the fortunes of the whole realm were interested, he would stand aside and descend from the high position which his predecessors had occupied with general consent.

extent of the concessions required.

Nor was it only in the question of imprisonment that the Commons were pressing upon him. Whilst the argument was proceeding before the Lords, the Lower House had again taken up the grievance of billeting. "In my county," said Sir Walter Erle, speaking of Dorsetshire, "under colour of placing a soldier, there came twenty in a troop to take sheep. They disturb markets and fairs, rob men on the highway, ravish women, breaking houses in the night and enforcing men to ransom themselves, killing men that have assisted constables to keep the peace." Other members had tales equally bad to tell. Coke proposed to petition the King against the abuse. Wentworth, true to his principles, suggested that a Bill should be drawn up to regulate the mode of quartering soldiers for the future. Soldiers must live, and Wentworth seems to have thought it useless to attack the evil unless provision were made for the necessity which had caused it. He proposed a petition to the King, to be followed by a Bill in due course of time. Orders were at once given to draw up the petition. This time, at least, Wentworth had succeeded in keeping the whole subject

April 8. Billeting soldiers.

CHAP. XVII. 1628.

from the cognizance of the Lords till the Bill was in existence.[1]

Charles's hopefulness was beginning to fail. As the requirements of the House became plainer to him, the prospect of supply grew more distant. Yet money was sadly needed. Denbigh had not left Plymouth. The pressed men were still deserting daily. The ships laden with corn for Rochelle were reported to be unfit for sea.[2] April 10 was Thursday in Passion week, and the House had already made provision for the Easter recess. But a message was brought from the King conveying his pleasure that there should be no recess. Not even on Good Friday were the Commons to have rest. The members were ill pleased to be deprived of their holiday. But Eliot suggested that worse was behind. He believed that the King's message had been in the hands of the Privy Councillors for two days. Why had it not been delivered before, unless it were with the expectation that when many members had left town it would be easy to hurry a vote of supply through a thin House? He moved that no vote of supply should be taken till the House was again full. His motion was not formally adopted. But the House had been put upon its guard.[3]

April 10. The Easter recess forbidden.

April 11. Debate on martial law.

Martial law, not supply, was the subject of that Good Friday's debate. Eliot placed the whole subject on the right footing. A paper of instructions had been read, appointing special punishments for military crimes. Mutiny, disregard of orders, and such offences

[1] *Harl. MSS.*, 4771, fol. 67-69 b.

[2] Denbigh to Buckingham, April 8; *S. P. Dom.*, c. 56.

[3] Mead says the motion was adopted. Mead to Stuteville, April 19; *Court and Times*, i. 342. Nethersole, *S. P. Dom.*, ci. 4, who was himself a member, says that it was rejected, and this is confirmed by the absence of any mention of its adoption in the *Harleian MS.*, 4771, fol. 74.

were to be punished in soldiers as they are now punished in every army in the world. To all this Eliot raised no objection. But he held that when a soldier committed an offence against a civilian, the civilian should have his remedy in the ordinary course of law, and not be dependent for justice on the good pleasure of the officers. Thus stated, the case against the Government involved the whole of the relations between the civil and the military power. Were soldiers to be subject to the laws, or were they to be a law to themselves? If the latter view was to prevail, how long would the laws of England subsist in their presence?

April 11.

The debate was interrupted in the strangest manner. In spite of Eliot's warning of the previous day Sir Edward Coke,[1] of all men in the world, started up to propose that the dates for the payment of the subsidies should be fixed. In vain Eliot explained that the business before the Committee was not supply. Secretary Coke rapturously echoed the proposal, and it seemed difficult to get rid of it decently. At last Wentworth rose. "I must confess," he said, with a bitter allusion to the day on which they were sitting, "I expected within myself this day to hear a sermon." As however the thing had been said, let the dates be fixed. But let them not be reported any more than the grant itself. Though even this was too much for some, Coke's untoward proposal was eventually disposed of as Wentworth suggested.

Coke's proposal about supply.

April 12.

Charles grew impatient, and sent a fresh message reproving the Commons for spinning out their time, and ordering them to vote the subsidies at once. 'Notice,' the Secretary explained, was taken 'as if this House pressed not upon the abuses of power, but upon power

Impatient message from Charles.

[1] *Harl. MSS.*, 4771, fol. 75 b, 78. That it was Sir Edward and not Sir John, seems to be settled by Nethersole's letter just quoted.

CHAP. XVII. 1628. April 12.

itself.' Sir John was asked to explain what he meant by power. The word, he replied, came from his Majesty, and to his Majesty alone belonged the explanation.

Wentworth knew that he was the author of the motion which had given such offence to the King. He moved for a Committee to explain that there been no intentional delay, and a statement was prepared for the Speaker to present together with the petition on billeting.[1]

The Lords incline towards the King.

The House was growing accustomed to Wentworth's leadership. A letter-writer of the day speaks of him as the man 'who hath the greatest sway in this Parliament.'[2] He might be able to force his policy upon the Commons. But would he be able to force his policy on the King? It seemed as if Charles would soon receive a powerful ally in the House of Lords. The Peers listened to Heath's argument, and arranged that the opinion of the Judges of the King's Bench should be heard. Buckingham and his friends pleaded for a decision without admitting the Lower House to a further reply. Eliot took alarm, and carried a motion for a message begging the Peers to decide nothing without hearing the Commons once more.[3]

Suffolk attacks Selden.

The temper of the courtiers in the Upper House was growing warm. "Will you not hang Selden?" said Suffolk, the son of James's Treasurer; "he hath razed a record, and deserves to be hanged." Selden in his place in the Commons indignantly denied the imputation. But Suffolk was too cowardly to stand by his words, and denied that he had spoken them. The Commons took up the defence of their member, but in

[1] *Harl. MSS.*, 4771, fol. 78–81.
[2] Nethersole to Elizabeth, April 14; *S. P. Dom.*, ci. 4.
[3] *Elsing's Notes. Harl. MSS.*, 4771, fol. 81.

CHAP. XVII.

1628.

the midst of more pressing business they were unable to bring the accusation home.[1]

April 14. The Judges heard by the Lords.

On the 14th the Judges appeared before the Lords. They did not bring much help to either party. They said that they had not given a final judgment, and that the prisoners might have applied for a *habeas corpus* the next day if they had pleased. The Court only meant to take further time to consider.

The King expostulates with the Commons.

That afternoon Charles received the explanation of the Commons, that they were right in considering grievances before supply. He replied sharply that he did not question their right. "But for God's sake," he said, "do not spend so much time in that as to hazard the ruin of your liberties and my prerogative by a foreign army." He was as careful of their liberties as they were themselves.

Charles spoke under the influence of the disheartening news which came to him from Plymouth. He had just sent an order to Denbigh to sail at all risks, and he had been told that the fleet might put to sea, but that there was no chance of its being able to fight its way into Rochelle.[2] All this made no impression on the Commons. They did not know what the King understood by the liberties which he said he was ready to maintain, even if they had been inclined to trust his unsupported promise. They took no notice of his words. They went quietly on with the debate on martial law, as though the King had never pressed them for money at all.[3]

The Commons again refuse to proceed with supply.

April 16. Fresh legal argument before the Lords.

On April 16 and 17, in consequence of the remonstrance of the Commons, there was a fresh

[1] *State Trials*, iii. 156.

[2] *Council Register*, April 12. Clerke to Buckingham, April 12; *S. P. Dom.*, c. 64.

[3] *Harl. MSS.*, 4771, fol. 91.

CHAP. XVII.

1628. April 16.

argument by the lawyers before the House of Lords. On the one side it was maintained that the King could in no circumstances commit without showing cause. On the other side it was alleged that, though the King might not abuse his power by imprisoning men for ever without allowing their appeal to the Courts, he might exercise a discretion in keeping back any particular case from the cognizance of the Judges.[1]

On the existence of this discretionary power the battle was to be fought. The bare assertion of a right in the King to override the laws would not meet with the support of the Upper House. A statement made by Serjeant Ashley in the course of his argument for the Crown, to the effect that the question was too high to be determined by a legal decision, was at once checked by Manchester and disavowed by Heath. Ashley was committed to prison by the Lords till he had apologised for his offence.[2]

April 21. Debate in the Lords.

April 22.

On the 21st the great subject was merely approached by the Peers. They resolved that the King and Council had power to commit upon just cause. On the 22nd they considered whether it was necessary for the cause to be expressed; or, in other words, whether the King or the Judges were to decide upon the legality of the commitment.

It was generally believed that the majority would be on the King's side. Heath's arguments had told, and the influence of the Court was strong. Within the last few days four new Peers, Coventry and Weston amongst them, had taken their seats. The Commons, in alarm, sent to beg for another conference before the vote was taken.

Resistance of the minority.

The opposition, minority as it was, stood firm. Saye

[1] *Lords' Journals*, iii. 746.

[2] *Ibid.*, iii. 759. *Elsing's Notes.*

was foremost in the combat. But he was warmly supported by those who had suffered from Buckingham's domination. Williams pronounced strongly for the popular interpretation of the law. Abbot was equally decided. The first hand held out to the King outside the ranks of the Court was that of a man whom he had deeply wronged. Bristol argued that they were simply discussing the limits of the King's legal power. Behind that was a regal power upon which he could fall back in extraordinary cases. 'As Christ,' he said, 'upon the Sabbath healed, so the prerogative is to be preserved for the preservation of the whole.' Bristol, in short, proposed that the law should be declared according to the demand of the Commons, but that an acknowledgment should be made that if a really exceptional state of things arose, the King might boldly set aside the law for the sake of the nation. But the Lord Keeper would have none of such help as this. For the Privy Council to commit without showing cause, he said, was only in accordance with the ordinary law. Upon this, Buckingham, confident in the support of the majority, moved that the debate be closed. The next step would have been to reject the Commons' resolutions, but Saye interposed with a motion for delay till the Judges had been consulted. If this were not done, those who were in favour of the resolutions would enter their protests. It was thought that, if it had come to a division, there would have been fifty-six votes recorded in opposition to the Court, against sixty-six in its favour. Buckingham did not venture to divide in the face of so formidable an opposition, and the debate was adjourned.[1]

April 22.

Middle course proposed by Bristol.

Rejected by Coventry.

The debate adjourned.

When the discussion was re-opened the next day, Arundel declared his concurrence in the general doctrine

April 24. Arundel's proposal.

[1] *Elsing's Notes. Harl. MSS.*, 4771, 102 b. Mead to Stuteville, May 3; *Court and Times*, i. 348.

CHAP. XVII.

1628. April 24.

of the Commons. But he thought that some modifications might be introduced into the resolutions. At Pembroke's suggestion a Committee was appointed to examine the whole bearings of the question. Before this examination Buckingham's majority melted away. It is said that before he went down to the House he assured the King that the resolutions would be rejected before he came away. For ten hours the debate swayed to and fro. The decisive impulse came at last from Abbot, who pointed out the ruinous consequences of a breach with the Lower House in the face of so many enemies abroad.[1] Buckingham's majority melted away, and it was resolved that counter propositions should be drawn up in lieu of the Commons' resolutions. As Harsnet, the Bishop of Norwich, was employed to put them into shape, it may be supposed that there was a defection on the Episcopal Bench, who, as a rule, were the chief support of the Court. The defection, however, was not universal. To Laud, at least, Harsnet's propositions seemed a base concession to expediency, sinning against the principle that the King is above all laws, even above Magna Charta itself.[2]

April 25. The Lords' propositions.

The first four propositions were intended to secure the subject against all interference with the ordinary course of justice. Magna Charta, and six other statutes by which it had been interpreted in early times, were asserted to be in force. Every freeman was declared to have 'a fundamental property in his goods, and a

[1] This debate is not reported by Elsing. The account in the text is taken from Contarini's despatch of May $\frac{5}{15}$. He gives no date, but his description will not suit any other day than this.

[2] A copy of the propositions (*S. P. Dom.*, cii. 14) is endorsed by Laud, as 'penned by Dr. Harsnet, Bishop of Norwich.' Amongst other notes in Laud's hand, is one referring to the confirmation of Magna Charta :— "Yes, but *salvo jure coronæ nostræ* is intended in all oaths and promises exacted from a sovereign."

fundamental liberty of his person.' His Majesty was to be requested to confirm the 'ancient just privileges and rights of his subjects in as ample and beneficial manner' as 'their ancestors did enjoy the same under the best of his Majesty's most noble progenitors;' and to promise that 'in all cases within the cognizance of the common law concerning the liberty of the subject, his Majesty would proceed according to the laws established in this kingdom, and in no other manner or wise.'

The fifth proposition.

The fifth proposition ran thus: "And as touching his Majesty's royal prerogative intrinsical[1] to his sovereignty, and entrusted him from God *ad communem totius populi salutem, et non ad destructionem*, that his Majesty would resolve not to use or divert the same to the prejudice of any of his loyal people in the property of their goods or liberty of their persons; and in case for the security of his Majesty's Royal person, the common safety of his people, or the peaceable government of his kingdom, his Majesty shall find just cause, for reason of State, to imprison or restrain any man's person, his Majesty would graciously declare that, within a convenient time, he shall and will express the cause of the commitment or restraint, either general or special; and, upon a cause so expressed, will leave him immediately to be tried according to the common justice of the kingdom."

In sending these propositions to the Commons, the Lords assured them that they had prejudged nothing. They were ready to hear anything that might be said on the other side.[2]

Spirit of the propositions.

It is only fair to the authors of these propositions to acknowledge that they seem to have been actuated by

[1] So in *Harl. MSS.*, 4771, fol. 110, and so quoted by Coke. The *Parl. Hist.* has 'incident.'

[2] *Parl. Hist.*, ii. 329.

CHAP. XVII.

1628. April 25.

a serious wish to mediate between the opposing parties. They wished, in opposition to Coventry and Buckingham, to exclude the Crown from all interference with the ordinary administration of the law. But they wished that the King should enjoy a right, analogous to the right of suspending the *Habeas Corpus* Act in our own times, of overriding the law in any special State emergency. Whether such a middle course was possible may well be doubted. The Lords who proposed to intrust Charles with such powers forgot that he had already ceased to inspire confidence. Even if this had not been the case, the language of the propositions was not felicitous. The power referred to was spoken of as sovereignty and traced to a divine origin. It was therefore entirely different from the prerogative which was considered as part of the law, and liable to discussion in the Courts.

April 26. They are criticised in the Commons.

When the propositions came before the Commons, they were savagely criticised by Coke. Was the confirmation of Magna Charta to be accorded as a grace? What were just liberties? Who were the best of his Majesty's predecessors? "We see," he said, "what an advantage they have that are learned in the law in penning articles above them that are not, how wise soever." Coming nearer to the heart of the matter, he asked what was intrinsical prerogative. "It is a word," he said, "we find not much in the law. It is meant that intrinsical prerogative is not bounded by any law, or by any law qualified. We must admit this intrinsical prerogative, and all our laws are out. And this intrinsical prerogative is intrusted him by God, and then it is *jure divino*, and then no law can take it away." His Majesty could commit when he pleased. It was the very thing for which King John had striven in vain. If the Lords refused their concurrence in the resolutions

of the Commons, they had better go directly to the King for redress. Selden spoke in the same tone. "At this little gap," he said, referring to the words 'convenient time,' "every man's liberty may in time go out."

1628. April 26.

In the main, most of the speakers took the same view of the case. But there were some who were still seeking for a middle course more satisfactory than that which had been proposed by the Lords. Let the old laws, argued Noy, be recited and declared to be in force. Then let a provision be made for the more ready issue of writs of *habeas corpus*, and let it be enacted that 'if there be no cause of detaining upon that writ,' the prisoner 'is to be delivered.'

Noy's proposal of a *Habeas Corpus* Act.

Wentworth was less explicit than Noy. But he had no wish to dive into points of sovereignty or divine right. He hoped that the question 'whether the King be above the law or the law above the King' would never be stirred. He rejected the fifth proposition as entirely as Coke or Selden. He would have nothing to do with it 'but only to disclaim it.' But he doubted the wisdom of Coke's proposal to petition the King. Perhaps he thought that such a petition was sure of rejection. But he merely argued that the petition, even if granted, would only be laid up in a Parliament Roll, and so remain practically unknown. Once more he declared that what was wanted was a Bill. There must be a clearer explanation of the words 'law of the land' in Magna Charta, and they might confer with the Lords about that. It should be ordained in the Bill 'that none shall be committed without showing cause.' A penalty must be set on those who violated it. Then speaking in his grand, impetuous way of the possible breach of the law in extraordinary cases—'When it shall,' he said, 'on any emergent cause, he thinks no man shall find fault with it.'[1]

Wentworth's speech.

[1] *Harl. MSS.*, 4771, fol. 112 b, 116. *Nicholas's Notes.*

CHAP. XVII.

1628. April 26.

Wentworth's idea was much the same as Bristol's. The law must be clear against arbitrary committals. If the time came when the good of the State imperatively demanded its violation, let the King violate it openly and boldly, and trust to the good sense of the nation for his justification.[1]

April 28. Coventry's declaration that the King's word must be taken.

To Charles there was but little to choose between Coke and Wentworth. On the 28th he summoned the Commons before him in the Upper House. It was a point, said the Lord Keeper in the King's name, of extraordinary grace and justice in his Majesty to suffer his prerogative 'to rest so long in dispute without interruption.' But the delay could be borne no further, and he was therefore commanded to declare that his Majesty held Magna Charta and the six statutes to be in force, and would 'maintain all his subjects in the just freedom of their persons and safety of their estates, according to the laws and statutes of the realm.' They would 'find

[1] It is worth noticing how this idea of a law binding for all ordinary purposes, which might yet be broken 'on any emergent cause,' was Wentworth's to the last. On September 13, 1639, he wrote about ship-money to Judge Hutton: "I must confess in a business of so mighty importance, I shall the less regard the forms of pleading, and do conceive that the power of levies of forces at sea and land for the very not feigned relief and safety of the public, is such a property of sovereignty, as, were the Crown willing, yet can it not divest itself thereof. *Salus populi suprema lex*; nay, in case of extremity even above Acts of Parliament." *Strafford Letters*, ii. 388. Ship-money, to Wentworth, was money levied for a real necessity. The forced loan was levied for a feigned necessity. One was for defence, the other for aggression. And the difference between Wentworth in office and Wentworth out of office must also be taken into account. Laud's opinions were much the same. In his 'History of the Troubles' (*Works*, iii. 399) he says: "By God's law and the . . . law of the land, I humbly conceive the subjects met in Parliament ought to supply their prince when there is just and necessary cause. And if an absolute necessity do happen by invasion or otherwise, which gives no time for counsel or law, such a necessity—but no pretended one—is above all law. And I have heard the greatest lawyers in this kingdom confess that in times of such a necessity, the King's legal prerogative is as great as this."

CHAP. XVII.

as much sincerity in his Royal word and promise as in the strength of any law they could make.'[1]

1628.

It was characteristic of Charles to suppose that his own word would stand in the place of a formal enactment. And the actual intervention of the King was not without its effect. Rudyerd urged a fresh conference with the Lords, in the vague hope that some plan would be discovered which might please every one. There was something, he thought, in the King's offer. He would be glad 'to see that good old decrepit law of Magna Charta, which hath been so long kept in and bedrid, as it were,' walking abroad again with new vigour and lustre, attended by the other six statutes. But even Rudyerd thought there must be a Bill forbidding imprisonment for refusing to pay loans or Privy seals.

April 28. Debate in the Commons.

To confer with the Lords, after the experience lately gained, was poor advice. "I cannot conceive," said Eliot of the propositions, "how they can be of use to us." He adhered to Wentworth's suggestion of proceeding by Bill.

Wentworth's views were thus at last adopted by the House. Resolutions and propositions were to drop together. Theories of law, theories of government, were to be left untouched. The Commons were to prepare a practical solution of the difficulty, and to send it up to the Lords for their acceptance or rejection. A sub-committee, in which Eliot, Wentworth, Pym, and Phelips, and a few others of the leading members, sat with all the lawyers in the House, was to draw up a Bill expressing the substance of the old statutes and of the recent resolutions of the Commons.[2]

A Bill to be prepared.

On the morning of the 29th the Bill which was to

April 29. The Bill

[1] *Parl. Hist.*, ii. 331.

[2] *Commons' Journals*, i. 890; *Harl. MSS.*, 4771, fol. 120; *ibid.*, 2313, fol. 65. *Nicholas's Notes.*

CHAP. XVII.

1628. on the liberties of the subject.

assure the liberties of the subject was brought into the Grand Committee by Coke, in the name of the sub-committee. "In this law," said the old lawyer, as he stood with it still in his hand, "we looked not back, for *qui repetit separat.* We have made no preamble other than the laws, and we desired our pen might be in oil, not in vinegar."[1]

Unlike the subsequent Petition of Right, the Bill contained no recital of grievances. Charles was not to be told that he had broken the law. But he was plainly to acknowledge that he had no right to billet soldiers without the householder's authority; to levy loans or taxes without consent of Parliament; or to commit a man to prison. If he did commit a man to prison the Judges were to bail him, or deliver him, without paying regard to the King's orders.

[1] As the Bill never got out of Committee, it is not mentioned in the Journals. It has hitherto been confused with the subsequent Petition of Right, and only fragments of the debates which followed have been known. The following is the only form in which I have met with it. *Harl. MSS.*, 4771, fol. 123:—

"An Act for the better securing of every freeman touching the propriety of his goods and liberty of his person.

"Whereas it is enacted and declared by Magna Charta that no freeman is to be convicted, destroyed, &c., and whereas by a statute made in E. 1, called *de tallagio non concedendo*: and whereas by the Parliament, 5 E. 3, and 29 E. 3, &c., and whereas by the said Great Charter was confirmed, and that the other laws &c.

"Be it enacted that Magna Charta and these Acts be put in due execution, and that all allegements, awards, and rules given or to be given to the contrary shall be void; and whereas by the common law and statute, it appeareth that no freeman ought to be committed" (convicted in *MS.*) "by command of the King, &c.; and if any freeman be so committed and the same returned upon a *habeas corpus*, he ought to be delivered or bailed; and whereas by the common law and statutes every freeman hath a propriety of his goods and estate, as no tax, tallage, &c., nor any soldier can be billeted in his house &c.; Be it enacted that no tax, tallage, or loan shall be levied &c. by the King or any minister without Act of Parliament, and that none be compelled to receive any soldiers into his house against his will."

1628. April 29. Debate on the Bill.

The question of imprisonment gave rise to some difference of opinion in Committee. The declaration that the King could not commit seemed to many to be harsh and uncalled for; and there were some who argued that it would be enough if provision were made for the due granting of the *habeas corpus*, whether the prisoner had been committed by the King or by a subject.

There was an evident division in the House. Eliot and Coke were for taking the Bill as it stood. Noy and Digges and Seymour were in favour of a modification. The party which afterwards passed over to the Crown was already forming.

May 1. Wentworth proposes a Bill of his own.

On the third day of the debate Wentworth rose. "We are here," he said, "to close up the hurt and danger of his Majesty's people. All our desires are but to this Bill; and this left unsecured makes us lose all our labour. We shall tread the olive, and lose all the oil. I agree the resolutions are according to law, and that we cannot recede a tittle. We can lay no other foundation than what is already laid. But here let us see how this misery comes on us; first by the too speedy commitments at Whitehall, and by too slow bailments at Westminster Hall. If we secure the subject at Westminster by a good law, it will satisfy and regulate the sudden commitments at Whitehall. We have by this Act a security by Magna Charta and the other laws. Let us make what law we can, there must—nay, there will—be a trust left in the Crown. Let us confirm Magna Charta and those other laws, together with the King's declaration, by this Act. Let us provide by this law to secure us that we may have no wrong from Westminster. Let it be enacted that we shall be bailed if a *habeas corpus* be brought and no sufficient cause. Such a law will exceed all the

CHAP. XVII.
1628. May 1.

laws that ever we had for the good of the subject; and if it be so, I desire to know whether our country will not blame us if we refuse it. I am to be changed by better reason if I see it." [1]

Value of the proposal.

Wentworth, it would seem, would have made the form of the Bill even more conciliatory than it was. He would have confined himself to a bare recital of the statutes confirmed, and would have added the words in which the King had declared his intention to observe them. But he would have omitted the denial of the King's right to commit. With a good *Habeas Corpus* Bill such a right would be perfectly harmless. If the prisoner committed without sufficient cause shown were liberated at once by the Judges, the committals complained of would soon come to an end of themselves.

It would have been curious to have seen Wentworth's proposal in its complete shape. The Judges would have the ultimate decision of the legality of the committal in their hands. We know that Wentworth spoke of the trust to be reposed in the King, and that he had spoken before of circumstances in which a breach of the law would be a commendable action. In his present speech there was no provision for such a case. Yet the omission is perhaps one which strikes us more than it was likely to strike Wentworth. In those days the communication between the Judges and the Government was much closer than it is now, and Wentworth may have thought that if special precautions were needed, the King would lay the grounds upon which he proposed to suspend the law

[1] The reports in the *Harleian MS.* and *Nicholas's Notes* differ verbally from one another. I have pieced the two together, taking the one or the other as it seemed more full, and changing connecting words to fit the sentences together.

privately before the Judges, and thus obtain their consent to the interruption of the ordinary course of justice.

But however this may have been, Wentworth's plan undoubtedly contemplated the transfer of authority from the King to the Judges. It was enough for him that he would leave to the Crown all authority worth having. It must not be forgotten that no proposal had as yet been made for abolishing the power of fine and imprisonment possessed by the Star Chamber. He, at least, would have had no difficulty in ruling vigorously under such conditions. But he had forgotten that the shadow of authority was as dear to Charles as its substance. It was not from Coke or Eliot that the blow came which levelled to the dust the edifice which he was constructing with such toil. For all we know, Wentworth's sway over the House may have been as absolute as ever. But as soon as he sat down the Secretary rose, declaring to the Committee that he was entrusted with a message from his Majesty. When the Speaker had taken the chair, Sir John stated that the King wished the question to be put "whether they would rest on his Royal word and promise."

The King's message.

The text was bad enough. But the Secretary's comment was far more irritating. The House, he said, could not expect to place the King in a worse position than he had been in before. He had a sword in his hand for the good of his subjects. Make what law they pleased, they could not alter that. He was himself a Privy Councillor, and it would be his duty, under any circumstances, to commit without showing the cause to anyone but the King.[1]

Sir John Coke's comment.

Upon such a message as this the Commons had

The House adjourned.

[1] *Parl. Hist.*, ii. 342.

CHAP. XVII.

1628. May 1.

but one course to pursue. They adjourned to consider their position. One gleam of hope remained. It was known that the Secretary had been in the House for some time, and it did not appear that any fresh communication had reached him after Wentworth began to speak. It was therefore just possible that if Wentworth's overtures were allowed to reach Charles, they might still be accepted.

May 2. Debate on the message.

When the House met the next day the case against Charles was put in the plainest terms by Sir Walter Erle. "It is conceived," he said, "that the subject had suffered more in the violation of the ancient liberties within these few years than in three hundred years before." Charles, in short, could not be trusted with powers which had been conceded to Henry and Elizabeth. The debate which followed showed how completely Charles had succeeded in throwing a chill over the sentiment which was rising in his favour. Those who thought that some moderate latitude should be allowed to the action of the Government were repelled by Charles's claim to be above all constitutional restrictions. Noy and Digges remained silent. Seymour spoke in defence of the Bill. The awkward advocacy of the Solicitor-General only served to irritate his hearers. The King, he said, was certain to keep his word as long as he lived. A bad king in future times would not be bound by any law which they might make.

The doctrine that the King was permanently above law was as offensive to those who, like Wentworth, recognised the fact that all possible cases could not be provided for by legislation, as to those who, like Coke, would reduce all government to the observation of the law. Wentworth, persisting in his opinion, almost smothered the King in compliments. Let them thank

Wentworth's appeal to the King.

his Majesty, he said, for his gracious message. Never House of Parliament trusted more in his goodness than they did as far as their own private interests were concerned. "But," he added firmly, "we are ambitious that his Majesty's goodness may remain to posterity, and we are accountable for a public trust; and therefore, seeing there hath been a public violation of the laws by his ministers, nothing can satisfy them but a public amends: and our desires to vindicate the subjects' right by Bill are no more than are laid down in former laws, with some modest provision for illustration, performance, and execution." As if to suggest that the Bill, as it stood, was not altogether such as he approved of, he added that the King should be informed that the House had not yet agreed upon its terms. When it had been discussed and perhaps amended in the two Houses, the King would have it before him in its final shape.

Nothing could be firmer in substance or more conciliatory in form. Even Coke, touched by the solemnity of the occasion, was conciliatory too. Let the Bill, he said, be couched in the form of a promise. "We will grant, for us and our successors, that we and our successors will do thus and thus." "It is to the King's honour," said Coke, "that he cannot speak but by record."

Coke's proposal.

All respect, in short, should be shown to the King. The House was ready to trust his word. But his word must be given and his authority exercised as part of the constitutional system of the country, and not as something outside of it.

Against the determination of the House it was useless to strive. Sir John Coke contented himself with denying the correctness of Wentworth's assertion that the laws had been violated. Wentworth proudly

Had the laws been violated?

CHAP. XVII.

1628. May 2.

answered that he had not said that the laws had been violated by his Majesty. They had been violated by his ministers. Seymour reminded the unlucky Secretary that he had himself acknowledged the violation, and had been content to excuse it on the plea of necessity.[1]

Wentworth's speech to be turned into a Remonstrance.

The King objects.

A sub-committee was appointed to draw up a Remonstrance on the basis of Wentworth's speech. The House answered readily to the hand of its leader. But Charles would have none of such mediation. He knew well that whatever his ministers had done, had been done with his approbation. He anticipated the Remonstrance by a message that he was ready to repeat the promise he had made, but he would not hear of any encroachment upon that sovereignty or prerogative which God had put into his hands for the good of his people. On May 13 the session must be brought to a close.[2]

May 5. The Remonstrance presented.

The Commons could not but stand firm. They ordered the Remonstrance to be presented in spite of the message, adding a few words of assurance to the King that they had no wish to encroach on his sovereignty or prerogative.

The King's reply.

Charles held his ground. He would confirm Magna Charta and the six statutes, but it must be 'without additions, paraphrases, or explanations.' For the rest, he had given his Royal word, and that was enough.[3]

End of Wentworth's leadership.

In the Remonstrance of May 5 Wentworth spoke for the last time in the name of the House of Commons. On that day his leadership came to its inevitable end. He had hoped to reconcile the King and his subjects. His idea of kingship was a high one, too high, indeed, for the circumstances of the time.

[1] In his speech of March 22; *Parl. Hist.*, ii. 233.

[2] *Harl. MSS.*, 4771, fol. 129–136. *Nicholas's Notes. Parl. Hist.*, ii. 345.

[3] *Parl. Hist.*, ii. 347.

CHAP. XVII.

1628. May 5.

But he regarded it, as Bacon had regarded it, as part of the constitution of England, as bound to act in consonance with the laws, and only rising above them because no written laws could possibly provide for all the emergencies which might arise. For Charles the kingship was something different from this, something divine in its origin and unlimited in its powers. Therefore even if he was willing to agree that he would not repeat the actions which had given just offence in the preceding year, he was not willing to bind himself to more. He would surrender the abuse. The authority from which the abuse sprung he would not surrender.

So Wentworth's hopes were baffled. There was to be no provision for the future with Charles's consent, no great constructive measure which would lay afresh the foundation of a higher union between King and people in accordance with the wants of the age and the experience of the past. Wentworth must step aside and make room for another policy and other men. The Commons, if they were to carry their point at all, must set their teeth hard and declare war to the end against their sovereign. It would have been well for Wentworth if he had recognised once for all that no stable constitutional edifice could be raised with Charles for its foundation, if the bitter cry "Put not your trust in princes" which was to be wrung from him when at last he stooped his proud head before an angry and triumphant nation, had risen to his lips as he sat moodily watching the troubled assembly which it was now no longer his to guide.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE PETITION OF RIGHT.

CHAP. XVIII.

1628. May 6.

WHEN the King's answer to the Remonstrance was read, Sir John Coke proposed that it should be debated in the House and not in Committee, as being more for the King's honour. Against this proposal Eliot protested. There was greater freedom of speech in Committee. If a member changed his views, he could say so, though he had already spoken. "For my part," said Eliot, "I am often converted."

Eliot's moral worth.

It was no hypocritical affectation of humility which brought these words to Eliot's lips. The records of this session are the highest witnesses to the moral worth of the patriotic orator. No man was ever placed in more trying circumstances than Eliot during the first weeks of this session. He had been the life and soul of the last Parliament. It had thought with his thoughts and spoken with his words. And now other men were listened to more than himself. Policy which he thought unwise was frequently adopted. And all this he had borne without the slightest sign of self-will or petulance. He had spoken his opinion freely, and had frankly acknowledged that his opinion was changed whenever he saw that the argument was going against him.

Debate in Committee.

After Wentworth's failure it was not likely that the House would again ask for anything short of the extreme measure of its claims. The discussion in Committee was opened by an appeal from Alford to the lawyers

present to inform him what benefit would accrue to the subject by the confirmation of the statutes without explanation. Littleton promptly answered that the subject would be in a worse condition than before, as the abandonment of the resolutions would imply a doubt whether they were a correct interpretation of the statutes confirmed. Other members dwelt upon the vagueness of the King's offers. The King, said Sir Nathaniel Rich, was like a debtor who said, 'I owe you nothing, but pray trust me.' They must know what the King offered before they could say whether they would trust him or not. Another member pointed to the difference of opinion on the meaning of the words 'the law of the land' in Magna Charta. "We all," he said, "agree what it is. But have the Lords and the Judges so agreed?" Pym pushed the argument still further home. "Our assurance," he said, "in the King's word were sufficient, if we knew what the King's sense and meaning is. We have not his word only, but his oath also at his coronation." If the law had been broken, it was clear that the King did not know what the law was. "We complain," he added, "of unjust imprisonment upon loans. I hear not any say we shall be no more, or that matter of State shall be no more pretended when there is none. . . . We all rest on the King's Royal word. But let us agree in a rule to give us satisfaction."

Sir John Coke remonstrated. Did Pym mean that the King's word added no force to a law? Sir Harbottle Grimston threw back upon the Secretary the words which he had recently spoken. "The King's ministers," he replied, "tell us here they must commit." Till the law on the point of committal was clearly understood it was hopeless to expect an agreement. Even Sir John saw that something must be

CHAP. XVIII. 1628. May 6.

conceded. The loan, he said, was the original grievance. Let them petition his Majesty not to repeat it.

The Secretary little thought what echo his words would have. Sir Edward Coke rose at once.[1] Yes, he said, let us rely on the King. "Under God, he is God's lieutenant. Trust him we must." But what was an answer in general words to particular grievances? A verbal declaration was not the word of a king. "Did ever Parliament rely on messages? They ever put up petitions of their grievances, and the king ever answered them? The King's answer is very gracious. But what is the law of the realm? that is the question. I put no diffidence in his Majesty. The King must speak by a record and in particulars, and not in general. Let us have a conference with the Lords, and join in a Petition of Right to the King for our particular grievances. Not that I distrust the King, but because we cannot take his trust but in a Parliamentary way."

Coke proposes a Petition of Right.

General acceptance of the proposal.

The word had at last been spoken which the House could accept as its only safe guidance. The King would not allow them to consider what was right and what was wrong. But at least they could ask that the meaning of the existing laws should be placed beyond doubt, and that they should know whether the interpretation of Heath or the interpretation of Coke and Selden was to prevail. The acceptance of the proposal was general and immediate. Eliot, Seymour, Glanville, Littleton, Phelips, Pym, Hoby, Coryton, and

[1] Mr. Forster (*Sir J. Eliot*, ii. 47) is evidently mistaken in speaking of Coke as rising with the draft in his hand. The Bill had been before the Committee for some days, and the petition was not yet in existence. It must be remembered that without the use of *Harl. MS.*, 4771, or *Nicholas's Notes*, Mr. Forster had a very limited amount of straw to make his bricks with. A great part of the speech he attributes to Coke does not seem to stand on any evidence, and I fancy he must inadvertently have carried his marks of quotation too far.

CHAP. XVIII.
1628.
May 6.

Digges adhered to it at once. Even Wentworth accepted it as now inevitable, though he reserved for himself the right of reconsidering his position after the King's answer had been received.

Was the King really trusted?

The leaders of the House had all declared that they were ready to trust the King, and they doubtless persuaded themselves that it was really so. Sir Nathaniel Rich rose at the end of the debate to tear away the veil. A petition, he said, was better than a Bill, for by it they would have an answer before they sent up the subsidies. A petition, in fact, would receive an immediate answer. A Bill would be sent up at the end of the session, and what was there to hinder the King from accepting the subsidies and rejecting the Bill?[1]

A Petition of Right to be prepared.

The sub-committee which had drawn up the previous Bill was intrusted with the preparation of the petition. A protest against forced loans, arbitrary imprisonment, and compulsory billeting was to form its substance. To these heads was to be added another against the late commissions for the execution of martial law. After recent experience it was hopeless to guard the broad assertion of their illegality by any provision for the maintenance of proper discipline in the troops, and all that could be done was to declare that the exercise of martial law in time of peace was absolutely illegal.

May 7. Martial law to be protested against.

May 8. The petition brought in.

There was no delay in the labours of the sub-committee. On the 8th the Petition of Right was brought in by Selden, and the House of Lords was asked to appoint a day for a conference upon it. In order to make the medicine more palatable to Charles, the resolution for the five subsidies was at last reported to the House.[2]

[1] *Harl. MSS.*, 4771, fol. 137–140 b. *Nicholas's Notes.*

[2] *Commons' Journals*, i. 894. *Harl. MSS.*, 4771, fol. 144.

CHAP. XVIII. 1628.

There was, indeed, need to render the medicine palatable if Charles was to accept it willingly. Everything to which he had objected in the Bill reappeared in the petition in a harder and more obnoxious form. He was no longer asked merely to regulate the course of his future action. He had to allow that actions done by his orders had been in direct opposition to the law of England. His acceptance of the Bill would have been a friendly agreement to order his relations with the nation on new terms. His acceptance of the petition would be a humble acknowledgment of error.

May 8. The petition contrasted with the Bill.

During these days when his proposals had been flatly rejected by the House, Charles had lost all patience. A draft exists of a declaration which was to explain the causes of the dissolution which had been resolved on. But better counsels prevailed, and the breach was averted for a time.[1]

A dissolution resolved on.

The petition was at once sent up to the Upper House. On the 10th a Committee of the Lords reported that they left the question of imprisonment to the House. The rest of the petition they accepted with a few amendments, most of which were intended to render the condemnation of the past conduct of the Government less abrupt, whilst there were two which had been drawn up with the object of retaining for the King the power of exercising martial law in time of peace over soldiers, though not over civilians.[2]

May 10. The petition before the Lords. Report of the Lords Committee.

Coming from such a source the report was clearly

[1] The draft is in Heath's hand (*S.P. Dom.*, cxxxviii, 45, i), and was calendared by Mr. Bruce, and quoted by Mr. Forster as applying to the dissolution in 1629. I find it hard to believe that either Mr. Bruce or Mr. Forster ever read the paper. There is not a word referring to the second session, whilst everything would be on place in May 1628. The paper is undated, but if it belongs to this session must have come in the week following May 2; I suspect after the petition was known to the King.

[2] *Parl. Hist.*, ii. 351.

1628.

May 10. Composition of the Committee.

more condemnatory of the Government than the petition itself. As we read over the list of the Committee, Coventry, Manchester, Arundel, Bedford, Bristol, Saye, Paget, Weston, with Bishops Harsnet and Williams,[1] we feel that Charles must indeed have stood alone in England before such names would be appended to words which even in their modified form contained the severest censure to which any king of England had submitted since the days of Richard II.

May 12. The King argues on his right of imprisonment.

Before such a demonstration of opinion as this it was impossible for Charles to maintain his ground. In a letter to the Lords he condescended to argue the point of his right to imprison. "We find it insisted upon," he wrote, that "in no case whatsoever, should it ever so nearly concern matters of State or Government, neither we, nor our Privy Council, have power to commit any man without the cause be showed, whereas it often happens that, should the cause be showed, the service itself would thereby be destroyed and defeated. And the cause alleged must be such as may be determined by our Judges of our Courts of Westminster in a legal and ordinary way of Justice; whereas the causes may be such as those Judges have not the capacity of judicature, nor rules of law to direct and guide their judgment in cases of so transcendent a nature; which happening so often, the very intermitting of that constant rule of government practised for so many ages within this kingdom, would soon dissolve the foundation and frame of our monarchy." Yet Charles was ready to engage that he would never again imprison any one for refusing to lend him money, and that when he did imprison he would always disclose the cause as soon as it could be done conveniently for the safety of the State.

[1] *Lords' Journals*, iii. 788.

CHAP. XVIII.

1628. May 14. His overture rejected by the Commons.

The King's letter was forwarded to the Commons by the Lords. But the Commons would not hear of such a basis of settlement. When the petition was complete they would ask for the King's assent. A letter was of no value. The Lords replied that they did not place more weight than the Commons upon the letter. All that they wished was to bring the petition into conformity with the letter, so as to give it a chance of passing with the King's assent.[1]

The Lords will try an accommodation.

The Lords were about to try what they could do to give effect to their wishes. But though they had been apparently unanimous in supporting the proposed course, the unanimity was greater in appearance than in reality. Saye and his friends agreed to allow the attempt to be made, on the express understanding that if it failed they might fall back on the petition as it stood.

May 15. Debate in the Lords.

That there was a strong element in the Upper House which desired to take a middle course was manifest. Men like Williams and Bristol and Arundel had suffered too much from the unrestrained exercise of the King's authority not to join heartily in the main demands of the petition. But they were too old statesmen not to be aware that a discretionary power must be lodged somewhere, and they laboured hard to discover some formula which should restrict it to real cases of necessity. And at first it seemed that the Lord Keeper would meet them half way. "No man," said Coventry, "ought to be imprisoned but a clear and direct cause ought to be showed, unless the very declaration of the cause will destroy the business, and in such a case, for a time, a general cause may serve." A Committee was appointed to draw up a form of words in which Coventry's view might be embodied.

It was no such easy matter. The Committee for a

[1] *Harl. MSS.*, 4771, fol. 155. *Lords' Journals*, iii. 796.

CHAP. XVIII.

1628. May 16. Williams's clause.

long time were unable to agree upon anything. At last they reported a clause proposed by Williams.[1] Thus it ran:—"That no freeman be—for not lending money or for any other cause contrary to Magna Charta and the other statutes insisted upon, and the true intention of the same, to be declared by your Majesty's Judges in any such matter[2] as is before mentioned—imprisoned or detained."

Its intention.

The clause was certainly not clear, and needed all Williams's explanations. But its intention was manifestly that which he said it was. He believed, as Wentworth believed, that in very special cases the

[1] There are two clauses in the *Lords' Journals* (iii. 799, 80) with no names to them. *Elsing's Notes.* The second, the one finally adopted, is twice claimed by Weston. From the same notes we learn that there had been two forms before, the one proceeding from Williams and the other from Arundel, the latter of which was probably in some way or other amended by Weston. Williams's speeches, as there reported, leave no doubt that his was the one in which the King's sovereignty is not mentioned. The usual attribution to Williams of the clause about sovereignty falls to the ground, and that theory, in fact, is directly contradicted by Williams's notes on the King's letter as given by *Hacket*, ii. 77. Of the supposed intrigues of Williams, and his alleged efforts at this time to bring Wentworth over to the Court, I know nothing. Hacket's account of a later reconciliation with Buckingham will be given in its proper place. Williams, no doubt, acted with Bristol and Arundel, but to act with Bristol and Arundel was to be opposed to Buckingham and the Court, though not so decidedly as Saye. The true story of Williams's proposed clause is told in a paper in *Harl. MSS.*, 6800, fol. 274, under the heading "The offer of accommodation made by the Bishop of Lincoln." He would have left the preface to the petition as it stood, adding a complaint that divers of his Majesty's subjects had been imprisoned without cause shown, and would then have inserted the clause in the text for "that no freeman in any such manner as is before mentioned be imprisoned or detained."

He also proposed a form for the King's reply, as follows: "Neither we nor our Privy Council shall or will at any time hereafter commit or command to prison, or otherwise restrain the persons of any for not lending of money unto us, nor for any other cause contrary to the true intention of Magna Charta and those other six statutes insisted upon to be expounded by our Judges in that behalf."

[2] "Matter" in the *Harl.* copy; "manner" in the *Lords' Journals.*

CHAP. XVIII. 1628. May 17.

King had by his prerogative the right of suspending the action of the ordinary law. But he shrunk from affirming this in so many words. The result was ambiguity itself. The author of the clause was the first to discover that his meaning had been misunderstood. He had to explain that in referring the decision of the legality of a commitment to the Judges he had no thought of countenancing the idea that they might refuse bail on the old ground of want of cause expressed. He meant, he protested, nothing of the sort. If his proposition meant that, it was 'the idlest that ever was offered.'

Explanation of Williams.

A medium of agreement which needs explanation from its author is self-condemned. But it was probably not its obscurity which rendered it unpalatable to the majority of the Upper House. "Power," said Weston, "which is not known and confessed, cannot be obeyed." The following clause, probably originally drawn up by Arundel and finally brought in by Weston,[1] left no doubt of the reservation of authority. It ran thus:—

Arundel's clause adopted.

"We humbly present this petition to your Majesty, not only with a care of preserving our own liberties, but with due regard to leave entire that sovereign power wherewith your Majesty is trusted for the protection, safety, and happiness of your people."

May 19. Its meaning doubted.

Was even this free from ambiguity? On the 19th, the Commons having asked leave to argue against the proposed amendments in the body of the petition, Williams moved that those amendments should be withdrawn and the new additional clause alone discussed. Buckingham rose to give his approval to the proposal, on the understanding that the reservation of sovereignty applied to the whole petition. Such a demand undeniably went far beyond the intention of

Buckingham's interpretation.

[1] As I have said, he twice claims the authorship in *Elsing's Notes*.

all members of the House who were more than mere courtiers. If it was granted, the King would be at liberty not merely to imprison without showing cause whenever he thought that the safety of the State so required, but to collect forced loans, to issue commissions of unlimited martial law, and to billet soldiers by force, whenever, in his judgment, such a contingency might arise. "If you extend this addition to every particular in the petition," said Saye, "the petition is quite overthrown. Your expressions were to reserve the sovereign power only in emergent cases, and not in the particulars mentioned in the petition, for then a man may be, for any particular mentioned in the petition, committed hereafter."[1]

Saye dissents.

May 20. Debate in the Commons.

Saye's objection was certain to find an echo in the Lower House. With a comparatively unimportant exception, all the amendments to the body of the petition were rejected by the Commons, and the rejection was acquiesced in by the Lords. The additional clause now formed the only point in dispute between the Houses.[2] But it was soon evident that the Commons would have nothing to say to it. They professed themselves unable to discover what sovereign power might mean. According to Bodin, said Alford, it means that which 'is free from any condition.' "Let us give that to the King that the law gives him, and no more." "I am not able," said Pym, "to speak to this question. I know not what it is. All our petition is for the laws of England, and this power seems to be another distinct power from the law. I know how to add sovereign to his person, but not to his power. Also

[1] *Elsing's Notes.*

[2] Rushworth, whom Mr. Forster had no choice but to follow, gives a debate as taking place on the 17th, which is really the debate of the 20th, together with a jumble of two speeches of Wentworth's foisted in from the 22nd and 23rd, and a speech of Selden's from the 22nd.

CHAP. XVIII.

1628. May 20.

we cannot leave to him sovereign power, for we never were possessed of it."[1] Then, showing how well he was informed of what had passed in the Upper House, Pym went on to allude to Buckingham's explanation. "We cannot," he said, "admit of these words with safety. They are applicable to all the parts of our petition." The clause was of the nature of a saving, and would annul the whole. Coke followed in much the same way. The prerogative, he said, was part of the law, but sovereign power was not.

The clause rejected.

Without a dissentient voice, therefore, the clause was rejected by the House of Commons. Coke had clearly taken the right ground when he said that the prerogative was part of the law. As Wentworth had said before, if an actual emergency occurred, no man would dispute what the King did. But to insert a special saving of such a right as being above the law was to make all law uncertain.[2]

Objection to the clause in the Lords.

When the answer of the Commons was carried up to the Lords, many a tongue was loosed to speak against Weston's clause. "The prerogative of the Crown," said Williams, "is a title in law, and those learned in the law do know the extent of it as well as of any other articles." "The saving," declared Bristol, "is no way essential to the business." Might not, he suggested, the petition be sent up as it was, accompanied by a verbal statement that the Houses had no intention of infringing upon the prerogative. To such a solution as this, however, Buckingham would not listen.

Buckingham stands by it.

"Let it be resolved here among us," he said, "that there be a saving." But he could not have his way.

[1] Mr. Forster corrects 'he never was' for 'we never were' (*Sir J. Eliot*, ii. 55, Note 8); but "we never were" has the authority of MSS. otherwise varying from one another; and Pym may have meant, 'We can only leave what we have control over. This is beyond our control.'

[2] *Harl. MSS.*, 4771, fol. 166.

The House adjourned at the joint motion of Saye and Arundel.

May 21. The Lords try to explain it away.

The next day Buckingham expressed his willingness to make a great concession. He was ready to change the words 'sovereign power' into 'prerogative.' The House seems to have been fairly puzzled. Paget suggested that the Judges should be asked their opinion. Abbot said he had heard a learned Peer say that they could not destroy the prerogative, even by an Act of Parliament. Bridgewater naively expressed his opinion that after so long a debate they ought to 'resolve of some addition or other,' and 'to think of fitting reasons.' Williams said he would not vote till it was made plain to him that the addition 'did not reflect nor any way operate upon the petition;' and Weston, the author of the clause, together with Dorset, usually one of the most determined partisans of the Government, expressed their full concurrence in this view of the case. No wonder that the original opposition pushed their advantage home. Saye and North urged that before going in search of reasons for the addition, they had better decide whether the addition was necessary at all. Buckingham begged the House to vote at once whether there was to be a saving of the King's power or not. Rather, urged Essex, let us vote first whether we will agree to the petition or not. In this chaos of opinion a proposal of Coventry's was finally adopted, that the addition should be again commended to the Lower House, but that he should be authorised to explain that it really meant as little as possible.[1]

The Lords no longer under Buckingham's control.

Buckingham had clearly lost his hold upon the Lords. As far as it is possible to judge from the debates, the prevailing opinion was very much the same as Wentworth's. The law was to be as it was

[1] *Elsing's Notes.*

CHAP. XVIII. 1628. May 21.

stated in the petition, but a loophole must be left for sudden and unforeseen emergencies. But the moment they came to put this upon paper the difficulty of not yielding more than they intended to yield was altogether insuperable.

May 22. The addition rejected by the Commons.

Insuperable, at least, they seemed to the Commons. In the debate which followed the Lord Keeper's communication, not a single voice was raised in favour of the clause. Lawyers and country gentlemen argued alike that the additional clause would destroy the whole petition. The King, it would be understood to say, cannot billet soldiers or force loans upon us by the law. But he can by his sovereign power. Sir Henry Marten stripped the whole question of its technicalities. According to Æsop, he said, the lion, the ass, and the fox went out hunting together. The booty was taken, and the ass having divided it into three equal portions, told the lion that it was his prerogative to choose between them. The lion took it ill that only a portion was offered him, and saying "It is my prerogative to choose," tore the ass in pieces. The fox, taught by the ass's calamity, contented himself with a little piece of skin. Such, implied Marten, would be the fate of the English people if they once acknowledged a power superior to the laws. To this view of the case Wentworth gave his hearty approval. "I think," he said, "we all agree we may not admit of this addition. If we do, we shall leave the subject worse than we found him, and we shall have little thanks for our labours when we come home. I conceive this addition, as it is now penned, amounts to a saving, whereas before the law was without a saving. I am resolved not to yield to it But let us not vote it; let a sub-committee collect the reasons already given."[1]

[1] This is from *Harl. MSS.*, 4771, fol. 176 b, except the words 'as it

CHAP. XVIII.

1628.

Wentworth was unwilling to come into unnecessary collision with the Lords, and as the House was of the same opinion, he had no difficulty in carrying his point so far as its immediate action was concerned. The clause was not rejected, but a sub-committee was to prepare an argumentative answer to be laid before the Lords.

May 22. Arguments to be presented to the Lords.

The next morning the sub-committee reported the heads of the answer which they proposed that Glanville and Marten should deliver. Before it had been adopted by the Grand Committee, Wentworth rose. "We are now fallen," he said, "from a new statute and a new law to a Petition of Right, and unless the Lords co-operate with us, the stamp is out of that which gives a value to the action. If they join with us it is a record to posterity. If we sever from them it is like the grass upon the house-top, that is of no long continuance. And therefore let us labour to get the Lords to join with us. To this there are two things considerable: first, not to recede in this petition either in part or in whole from our resolutions; secondly, that the Lords join with us, else all is lost. We have protested we desire no new thing; we leave all power to his Majesty to punish malefactors. Let us clear ourselves to his Majesty that we thus intend. It is far from me to presume to propound anything. I dare not trust my own judgment, only to prevent a present voting[1] with the Lords. Let us again address ourselves to the Lords that we are constant in our grounds that we desire no new thing, nor to invade upon his Majesty's prerogative: but let us add, though we may not admit of this addition, yet if their Lord-

May 23. Wentworth proposes a further accommodation.

is now penned,' which come from *Nicholas's Notes*. The debate is headed in *Nicholas*, May 23.

[1] Voting a rejection of the clause in opposition to them.

CHAP. XVIII.

1628. May 23.

ships can find out any way to keep untouched this petition, we will consider of it and join with them."[1]

Wentworth was consistent with himself in attempting to provide for all emergencies. To Eliot the suggestion was a mere machination of evil, for he saw, what Wentworth did not see, that these emergencies must be left to future generations to provide for; and he saw too, in a dim way, that the House of Commons was the heir of the Tudor monarchy, and would be the depository of those extraordinary powers which Charles had forfeited the right to exercise. And, thus without knowing it clearly, he became the advocate of change in the frame of the State,—of change which should maintain old principles and should act within the lines of the old constitution; whilst Wentworth, whose mind was full of schemes for alteration and reform, was an advocate of the constitutional forms which had existed in the days of his youth. Early in the session he had announced that the Commons could do nothing without the King. He now announced that they could do nothing without the Lords.

Eliot's reoinder.

To Eliot such a suggestion was intolerable. "As though," he said, "the virtue and perfection of this House depended upon and were included in their Lordships! Sir, I cannot make so slight an estimation of the Commons as to make them mere cyphers to nobility! I am not so taken with the affectation of their Lordships' honour, so much to flatter and exalt it. No! I am confident that, should the Lords desert us, we should yet continue flourishing and green." At the proposal itself, he went on to say, he could not but be amazed. It was to throw them back after so long a debate into new rocks and

[1] *Harl. MSS.*, 4771, fol. 176 b.

difficulties.[1] Eliot then insisted on the danger of making the slightest change in the petition, and charged Wentworth with deserting the cause which he had once espoused. Then addressing himself to the substance of the proposal, he exposed in masterly language its entire futility. "No saving in this kind," he said, "with what subtlety soever worded, can be other than destructive to our work."

These last words contain the true vindication of the persistency with which the Commons held to their determination. But Wentworth too, looking at the question from a different point of view, was not entirely without excuse. Whether the Commons were right or wrong, their petition contained within it the germs of a revolution. As a matter of fact no man then living could remember the time when the discretionary power which Charles claimed had not been exercised by the Crown. Wentworth at once rose to vindicate his motives. Declaring that he had merely meant by his metaphors that without the assent of the Peers the petition would have no statutory force, he explained his own position. "My proposition," he said, "is for no moderation, but preserve the petition in the whole or the parts of it; I will never recede from it. Put it not in extremity to have it voted against us. It was wondered I spake after so long a

Wentworth's reply.

[1] There is evidence here that Eliot's speeches in the *Port Eliot MSS.*, though in the main correct, were subject to some manipulation. He is there made to say that part had been ended "by the Grand Committee this morning in direction of those arguments to the Lords which they framed." When Eliot wrote this down, he must have fancied that the speech had been delivered in the House, and Mr. Forster thereupon (ii. 68) supposed that Wentworth's speech was delivered in support of a fresh proposal of the Lords which was really not discussed till the 24th. But unless the whole debate is a dream of the Harleian reporter, the debate was in Committee, and the direction of the Committee was not given till after Eliot's speech was finished. The end of Eliot's speech, too, seems to have been altered in the same way.

CHAP. XVIII.

1628. May 23.

debate. I have discharged my conscience and delivered it. Do as you please. God, that knows my heart, knows that I have studied to preserve this Parliament, as I confess the resolutions of this House, in the opinion of wise men, stretch very far on the King's power, and if they be kept punctually, will give a blow to government. The King said that if government were touched, he was able to protect us; and by[1] this saving indeed is added nothing to him."

How far was there weight in it?

It was quite true; the bare law of the petition could never be the rule for all future time. Martial law would have to be executed upon soldiers whether it were time of peace or not. Provision must somehow be made for lodging the men when they were brought together, and, if extraordinary evils demanded extraordinary remedies, men must be imprisoned without much regard for their legal rights. But what Eliot saw and Wentworth did not see, was that these powers could no longer safely be intrusted to Charles. When the law was once made without exception, exceptional cases could be settled as they arose with consent of Parliament. To us the change seems simple enough. But the change was great in those days. By making the consent of Parliament necessary to the King, it deprived him of that right of speaking in all emergencies as the special representative of the nation, which he held from custom if not from constitutional law.

The Commons decide against Wentworth.

Wentworth's argument made no impression on those who heard it. Seymour alone supported it. But he met with no response, and Glanville and Marten were despatched to lay their long train of reasoning before the Lords.[2]

It was impossible for the Lords to maintain the

[1] "to" in MS.

[2] *Harl. MSS.*, 4771, fol. 176 b. *Parl. Hist.*, ii. 364.

1628. May 23.

addition any longer. As far as we can judge, the great majority of the House, with Bristol and Williams at its head, was of the same opinion as Wentworth. Argument and the current of events had made Buckingham powerless. But whilst this majority was strong enough to refuse to follow Buckingham, its weakness, like Wentworth's weakness, lay in the impossibility of placing ideas upon paper without surrendering to the King more than they meant to surrender. Weston's clause had merely been thrown out as a feeler, and the moment it was seriously assailed it was dropped without difficulty. Yet the Lords felt that something must be done. Clare proposed that a Committee of both Houses should draw up another form upon which they could all agree. Abbot suggested that a conference should be held to see 'if there be any that can find a more commodious way of accommodation.' There was plainly nothing definite fixed, nothing which it was possible to ask the House to stand on. Laud's old friend, Bishop Buckeridge, of Rochester, made a very different proposal. Let the petition, he said, be delivered to the Judges, that they may give their opinion whether anything in it 'do intrench upon the King's prerogative.' Their opinion could then be entered on the roll, 'and then this petition can no way prejudice the King's right.' The idea here was much the same as Wentworth's; the idea of an inalienable prerogative, not above the law but part of the law, and which it was therefore not necessary to express in words. Clare's suggestion was the one adopted. The Commons were asked to join the Lords in a Committee, 'to see if, by manifestation and protestation or declaration or any other way, there could be any way found out to satisfy his Majesty." [1]

The Lords make a fresh proposal.

[1] *Elsing's Notes; Harl. MSS.*, 4771, fol. 193 b.

CHAP. XVIII.

1628.

May 24. which is rejected by the Commons.

The proposal was elastic enough. But the reasons for rejecting it were admirably put by Phelips. "What," he said, "should be the subject of this accommodation? It must be somewhat like the last addition. If it be so put into other words and acted otherwise, yet virtually and actually it will be interpreted to amount to the very same thing. Also we have already expressed as much care over his Majesty's prerogative as can be made. We have obliged ourselves by our oaths, and how apt have we been to defend it upon all occasions!" Wentworth and Seymour were in favour of the scheme of the Joint Committee. But they found no support, and the proposed Committee was refused.

May 25. The middle party in the Lords agree with the Commons.

The action thus taken by the Commons was in little danger of meeting with a repulse in the House of Lords, as Wentworth had feared. The leaders of the middle party which was now able to command a majority, declared that they would push their desire for an accommodation no further. Arundel explained that he had now no wish to press the Lower House 'with an addition to this petition.' "We do hold it fit," he added, "to declare to the King that we intend not to prejudice his prerogative in this petition, in regard we are exempted from the oath of supremacy." The Lords, in fact, would practically join in that oath to which Phelips had appealed, and the right of the prerogative would be left as vague as before. Bristol accepted the way of escape offered. The Commons, he said, had declared that they had no intention of prejudicing the prerogative. Let the Lords make the same declaration at once.

Resistance of Buckingham and his friends.

Would this view of the case be acceptable at Court. Dorset, impulsive as when he had gone forth to the bloody duel which has fixed a stain on his name for ever, or when he declared in the Parliament of

1621 that the passing bell was tolling for religion, stood foremost in the breach. "My Lords," he said, "if I did not believe this petition would give the King a greater wound here in his government than I hope ever an enemy shall, I would hold my peace."[1] Buckingham himself declared firmly against the course proposed. "The business," he said, "is now in your hands alone, which gives me comfort. It now remains whether you will depart from your addition. If we now depart from our addition, we do in a manner depart from ourselves. The addition must[2] be either in the preamble, or in the body, or the conclusion. If it be nowhere I cannot give my vote to it. The reason is[3] that it carries words in it not expressed in Magna Charta and the other six statutes. Let them go their way and we make a petition, and then we may make a protestation as we please."

1628. May 25.

If anything were needed to justify the resolution of the Commons, it was these words of Buckingham. He, at least, wanted something more than the prerogative which Bristol and Arundel were ready to allow. But the days were gone by when Buckingham could hope to carry the House with him. Abbot advised the House to 'join with the Commons in the petition, though he would have had also some demonstration of their saving of the King's just prerogative.'[4] "When their liberties," said Northampton, "have been trenched upon, their goods have been taken away, not by a legal course, I will desire that it may be amended. When the subjects' liberty is in question, I will creep upon my knees with a petition to his Majesty with all humility.

The House adopts the view of the Commons.

[1] The report ends at "shall." The five following words are added from conjecture.

[2] "to be," MS.

[3] "Reason that," MS.

[4] Minute Book, *House of Lords MSS.*

CHAP. XVIII.

1628. May 25.

When the King's prerogative is in question, I will get upon my horse and draw my sword, and defend it with my life and estate." Maynard followed with a motion that a declaration might be prepared for clearing the King's prerogative.[1]

May 26. Declaration of the Lords.

The advice thus given was taken. The next day a form was unanimously adopted by which the Lords declared, altogether apart from the petition, that their intention was not to lessen or impeach anything which by the oath of supremacy they had 'sworn to assert and defend.'

It was not much. The oath of supremacy simply bound those who took it to defend the authority of which the Crown was already possessed, without specifying what that authority was. The declaration however left it open to those who held that the Crown had a right to override the law in cases of emergency, to assert that they had not sacrificed their consciences to political conveniency. The Commons on their part had no desire to push matters further. On the 28th the petition was brought up to the Lords, and was by them adopted without more discussion.

May 28. The petition passes both Houses.

The King's difficulties.

Three or four weeks earlier, Charles would probably have refused even to consider the petition in the form in which it now reached him. But the last week had brought news of disaster which would hardly allow him to turn his back so easily upon the proffered subsidies. In Germany Stade was lost. In France Rochelle was still unsuccoured.

Jan. Morgan at Stade.

The disasters of the autumn of 1627 had converted the war in North Germany into a succession of sieges. Whilst Schleswig and Jutland were overrun by the Imperialists, Christian clung with the grasp of despair to the fortresses by which the mouth of the Elbe was

[1] *Elsing's Notes.*

CHAP. XVIII.

1628. March.

guarded. Krempe and Glückstadt on the eastern side were supplied with money and provisions by the Dutch. Stade, near the western bank, had the misfortune to be confided to Morgan's English garrison. Every disposable penny in the Exchequer had been applied to the French war, and since August the little force, 4,000 men in all, was left to shift for itself.[1] Anstruther and Morgan raised a little money on their own credit, not enough to do more than to procure a fresh supply of shoes and stockings. Even thus deserted, the brave old Morgan showed no signs of flinching. "If it must be my extreme hard fortune," wrote the General, "to be thus abandoned, I will not yet abandon myself, nor this place, as long as with cat and dog—our present diet—we shall be able to feed an arm to that strength that it may lift a sword."[2]

Week after week slipped away, and help came not. Want and disease were doing their fell work, and Morgan, with the enemy all around, had little hope of holding out long even if no siege was opened. Before the end of March Anstruther received a little money from England. But it was too late. The town was closely blockaded and no supplies could be sent in. On April 27 Stade was formally surrendered to Tilly.[3] The garrison was allowed to march out with all the honours of war, and a month later, whilst the Lords and Commons were fighting their last battle upon the Petition of Right, the whole sad story was known in England.[4]

April 27. Surrender of Stade.

Thus dropped the curtain amidst gloom and dis-

[1] At the beginning of the year the garrison numbered 3,900, viz. 2,700 English, 700 Scots, 500 Germans. Anstruther to Conway, Jan. 5; *S. P. Denmark.*

[2] Morgan to Conway, Jan. 25; *S. P. Denmark.*

[3] Anstruther to Conway; Morgan to Conway, May 3; *ibid.*

[4] Woodward to Windebank, May 21; *S. P. Dom.*, civ. 47.

CHAP XVIII.

1628.

End of English intervention in Germany.

aster upon the scene of English history upon which Charles and Buckingham had entered so hopefully four years before. The war for the deliverance of the Palatinate, to be waged whether the nation supported it or not, had come to that. The sixteen hundred brave men, worn with toil and hunger, who stepped forth from Stade with colours flying and with arms in their hands, the noble old General who had held his own so long, abandoned as he was by King and country, had no need to feel the shame of failure. The shame was for those who had directed the course of war so aimlessly, and who had so erroneously judged the conditions of the contest.

Even now Charles thought but little of the disaster in Germany compared with the other disaster in France. The deliverance of the Palatinate had come to be for him a matter of secondary importance, in which he had long since ceased to expect success. The deliverance of Rochelle was a matter of personal honour.

Before the end of April Denbigh's fleet, sixty-six vessels in all, had at last left Plymouth Sound. The crews were pressed men, carried off against their wills from their daily occupations to a service of danger in which the reward was but scanty pay, or most probably no pay at all. Many of them were soldiers converted forcibly into sailors for very necessity. Such a fleet was hardly likely to overcome very moderate opposition. And when, in the afternoon of May 1, Denbigh's force ranged up in front of the port of Rochelle, the danger was plainly seen to be of the most formidable description. The passage up the harbour, narrow enough of itself, was still further narrowed by moles jutting out from either side, and the opening between them was guarded by palisades, in front of which were vessels, some of them sunken, some floating at the level

May 1. Denbigh's fleet at Rochelle.

Defences of the French.

1628.

May 1.

of the water. Even to reach such a formidable obstruction it would be necessary to beat down the fire of twenty armed vessels, supported by crowds of musqueteers who were in readiness either to fire upon the enemy from the shore or to float off in barges to the succour of their friends. It may be questioned whether Drake or Nelson, followed by crews as high-spirited and energetic as themselves, could have made the attack successfully. It is certain that Denbigh's force, composed as it was of men without heart in the matter, could not but fail.

Of the details of the failure it is hardly possible to decide in the midst of the conflicting evidence. The English officers, when they came home, threw all the blame upon the Rochellese who accompanied them, whilst the Rochellese bitterly retorted the accusation. But it is plain that the English officers had no confidence in their chance of success, and Denbigh was not the man to inspire those beneath him with a more daring spirit. A resolution was taken to wait till the next spring-tides made the attack easier for his fire-ships. But on the morning of the 8th a fresh apprehension seized upon the commander. The wind was blowing out of Rochelle, and if he could not set fire to the ships of the enemy, the French might possibly set fire to his. He therefore gave the order to weigh anchor, that the fleet might retire to a little distance. When the minds of men are in a state of despondency the slightest retrograde movement is fatal. The Rochellese weighed anchor as they were told, but they understood that the expedition had been abandoned, and made all sail for England. Thus deserted, the whole fleet followed the example.[1]

May 8. Failure of the undertaking.

[1] Examinations of Ramboilleau and Le Brun, May 16. Denbigh, Palmer, and Weddell to Buckingham, June 2; *S. P. Dom.*, civ. 2 i., 3 i., cvi. 11.

CHAP. XVIII.

1628.

The first news of difficulty had only served to sharpen Charles's resolution. On the 17th he issued orders to Denbigh to hold on at Rochelle as long as possible and to ask for reinforcements if he found them needful.[1] On the 19th he knew that the fleet was on its way home.[2] Never before had he been so angry. "If the ships had been lost," he cried, impatiently, "I had timber enough to build more." He at once despatched Denbigh's son, Lord Fielding, to Portsmouth with orders to press into the King's service every vessel he could meet with, and to direct his father to go back at all hazards to Rochelle, and there to await the further supplies which would be sent.[3] Secretary Coke himself was sent down to Portsmouth to hurry on the reinforcements. On the 27th Denbigh was off the Isle of Wight, professing his readiness to return as soon as his shattered fleet could be collected.[4] But it was easier to talk of returning than actually to return. Three of Denbigh's vessels laden with corn for Rochelle were snapped up by the Dunkirk privateers within sight of the English coast.[5] The ships which remained were full of sick men, and in urgent need of repair. The fire-ships were not ready. There were not enough provisions on board to enable the fleet to stay long at Rochelle, even if it returned at once. The ships were in want of water, but Denbigh dared not send his men on shore lest they should run away from so unpopular a service. Before this combination of difficulties even

May 17. Determination of Charles not to give way.

May 19.

May 27.

May 28.

May 30.

[1] The King to Denbigh, May 17; *S. P. Dom.*, civ. 8.

[2] The date we learn from Contarini. The news, as we know from the examinations cited at p. 271, note 1, reached Plymouth and Dartmouth on the 16th.

[3] Fielding to Buckingham, May 20; Woodward to Windebank, May 21; *S. P. Dom.* civ. 34, 47. *Contarini's Despatch*, May $\frac{20}{30}$.

[4] Denbigh to Buckingham, May 27; *S. P. Dom.*, cv. 29.

[5] The Council to Buckingham, May 30; *Rushworth*, i. 587.

Charles was compelled to give way, and orders were despatched to Denbigh to refit his squadron, but to remain in England till the whole available maritime force of the country could be got ready to accompany him.[1]

May 26. The King's difficulties about the petition.

Such were the tidings pouring in upon Charles during the days when he was considering the answer which he would give to the Petition of Right. Unless he gave his consent to that, he would never touch a penny of the subsidies, and without the subsidies the relief of Rochelle was absolutely hopeless. Everything combined to make him anxious to assent to the petition, if he could do it without sacrificing the authority which he believed to be justly his. And the one point which still appeared necessary to him to guard was the right of committing men to prison in special cases without showing cause.

In the face of past events, the Commons had reasonably decided that this could not be. But Charles naturally thought otherwise. We need not suppose that he nourished any violent or unfair intentions. He would doubtless represent to himself that he wanted no more than the power of intervening in special emergencies for the good of his people, and enough had passed in the two Houses to make it possible for him to imagine that he would still be able to have his way. The Lords had distinctly spoken of his prerogative as something untouched by the petition, and even the Commons had declared that they had no intention of encroaching upon it.[2] A hypocritical prince would perhaps have been content with this, would have assented to the petition and tacitly reserved for himself

[1] The letters of Denbigh and Coke containing these details will be found in *S. P. Dom.*, cv. and cvi.

[2] *Parl. Hist.*, ii. 347.

CHAP. XVIII.

1628. May 26.

the right of breaking it afterwards. But Charles's hypocrisy was not often of this deliberate kind. He usually deceived, when he did deceive, rather by reticence and concealment than by open falsehood. As soon therefore as the petition was agreed upon by the Peers, and before it had been formally presented to him, he summoned the Judges into his presence.

The King's questions to the Judges. May 27. Their answer.

The question he asked them was 'whether in no case whatsoever the King may not commit a subject without showing a cause.' Their answer was delivered the next day. "We are of opinion," they said, "that by the general rule of the law the cause of commitment by his Majesty ought to be shown; yet some case may require such secresy that the King may commit a subject without showing the cause, for a convenient time." In other words, the Judges held that they would still have the power of remanding an accused person.

That such a question should have been asked can surprise no one who has attended carefully to the debates in the House of Lords. The idea that the petition in this respect could not be literally carried out was one which had occurred even to many of those who were prepared to recommend its adoption as it stood.

The King's second question.

The King's second question was of more doubtful wisdom. He asked 'whether in case a *habeas corpus* be brought, and a warrant from the King without any general or special cause returned, the Judges ought to deliver him before they understood the cause from the King?' Such a question answered in the affirmative would imply that, as in the case of the last autumn, the Judges ought to await the King's announcement of the cause, however long it might suit him to withhold it.

May 30. The Judges' second answer.

The Judges answered cautiously. "Upon a *habeas corpus*," they said, "brought for one committed by the

1628. May 30.

King, if the cause be not specially or generally returned, so as the Court may take knowledge thereof, the party ought by the general rule of law to be delivered. But if the case be such that the same requireth secresy and may not presently be disclosed, the Court in discretion may forbear to deliver the prisoner for a convenient time, to the end the Court may be advertised of the truth thereof."

Charles was evidently dissatisfied with this reply. In plain English, it meant that the Judges might grant a remand at their discretion, but that the length of the remand was not to depend upon the King's pleasure. So far the decision of the Judges was in consonance with the rules of common sense. As had been pointed out again and again, cases would arise in which criminals at large would escape from justice if they knew on what charge their confederates had been arrested. But was the decision in consonance with the Petition of Right? Charles anxiously put the question whether, if the King grant the Commons' petition, he doth not thereby conclude himself from committing or restraining a subject for any time or cause whatsoever, without showing a cause. The answer of the Judges was that he did not. "Every law," they explained, "after it is made, hath his exposition, and so hath this petition; and the answer must have an exposition as the case in the nature thereof shall require to stand with justice, which is to be left to the courts of justice to determine, which cannot be discerned until such case shall happen; and although the petition be granted there is no fear of conclusion as is intimated in the question." [1]

The third question.

May 31. The third answer.

The day after the last reply was given in was Whit-Sunday, a day spent as busily by the King as

June 1. The Council consulted.

[1] *Ellis*, ser. 2, iii. 250. The original copy of the questions and answers is in *Hargrave MSS.*, 27, fol. 97.

CHAP. XVIII.

1628. June 1.

Good Friday had been spent by the House of Commons. At the council table the whole question of the petition was discussed, and the forms of answer drawn up by Heath to suit every possible contingency were doubtless laid before the board. Of these forms[1] there was probably only one which, to any extent, suited the exigencies of Charles's position. "Since both the Lords and Commons," it was proposed that the King should say, "have severally, with dutiful respect to us, declared their intentions not to lessen our just power or prerogative as their sovereign, we do as freely declare our clear intention no way to impeach the just liberty of our subjects; and therefore, this right undoubtedly being so happily settled between us and our people, which we trust shall ever continue, we do freely grant that this petition shall in all points be duly observed."

Heath's suggested answer.

By these words the petition would become the law of the land, especially if the old words of Norman French, "*Soit droit fait comme est desiré*," had been added. The claim to special powers would still have been maintained, but by the use of the word 'prerogative' Heath not only borrowed the expression of the House of Commons itself, but he placed the King's claim under the special guardianship of the Judges, who were constantly accustomed to decide on the extent of the prerogative.

It may be that Charles shrunk from subjecting his authority to the decision of the Judges. It may be that he had little taste for a clear and definite restriction upon his powers. The day before, too, had been spent in Buckingham's company,[2] and Buckingham

[1] The first one in *S. P. Dom.*, cv. 95. Others will be found in this and the following papers.

[2] *Contarini's Despatch*, June $\frac{7}{17}$.

CHAP. XVIII.

1628.

had no wish to see the King give way. The form finally adopted, with the full consent of the Privy Council,[1] united all the objections it is possible to conceive. "The King willeth," so it was determined that the Lord Keeper should speak, "that right be done according to the laws and customs of the realm; and that the statutes be put in due execution, that his subjects may have no cause to complain of any wrongs or oppressions contrary to their just rights and liberties, to the preservation whereof he holds himself in conscience as well obliged as of his prerogative."[2]

June 1. Answer agreed on.

Its worthlessness.

Such an answer meant nothing at all. The petition was not even mentioned. It was Charles's old offer of confirming the statutes whilst refusing the interpretation placed upon them by the Commons. Its words breathed an entirely different spirit from the questions to the Judges. The King no longer asks for a limited power to meet special emergencies, which Bristol and Wentworth, if not Eliot and Coke, would have been willing to grant him, but he throws back not merely the question of imprisonment, but every question which the petition professed to answer, into the uncertain mazes of his own arbitrary will. If nothing better than this was to be had, the Commons had toiled in vain.

June 2. The answer given.

The next morning the Peers and Commons were in the King's presence in the House of Lords. "Gentlemen," he said, "I am come here to perform my duty. I think no man can think it long, since I have not taken so many days in answering the petition as ye spent weeks in framing it; and I am come hither to show you that, as well in formal things as essential, I desire to give you as much content as in me lies."

[1] The part taken by the Council is gathered from the subsequent debates in the House of Lords.

[2] *Lords' Journals*, iii. 835.

CHAP. XVIII.

1628.

Then, after a few words from the Lord Keeper, the answer agreed upon the day before was read.

June 3. Its consideration postponed.

When this answer was read in the Commons the next morning, Eliot, representing the general dissatisfaction, moved that its consideration should be postponed till Friday, June 6.[1] But Eliot had something more to say than that. The breach with the King against which he had struggled so long seemed now inevitable. But was it really the King who was to blame? Eliot must have known at least as well as we can know how Buckingham had been the soul of the opposition to the petition in the House of Lords, and how he had struggled to the last to make it meaningless; and he must have suspected, if he did not know, that the last unsatisfactory answer had been dictated by the favourite.[2] And, if this were so, Eliot may well have thought that the time was come when the legal claims on which the Commons had been hitherto standing must be reinforced with other arguments, reaching far more widely than any which that Parliament had yet heard. He would again stand forward as the Eliot of 1626. Subsidies must be refused, if they were to be refused at all, not merely because the King's part of the bargain, tacitly made, had not been fulfilled, but because, as the last Parliament had declared, they would be utterly wasted if they were to pass through Buckingham's hands. What danger he might draw on his own head, Eliot recked nothing.

Buckingham's part in the matter.

[1] *Nicholas's Notes.* This, with the King's answer, and a short note of Eliot's second speech, is all that Nicholas gives us between May 26 and June 6. The invaluable Harleian report, too, deserts us at May 27; so that we are by no means so well informed about these latter proceedings as about the earlier ones.

[2] Whether it was so or not, I cannot say. But the contrast between the spirit of the questions to the Judges, and that of the answer adopted by the Council, where Buckingham was supreme, is very suspicious.

CHAP. XVIII.
1628. June 3.

Like the great Scottish reformer, he was one who 'never feared the face of any man.' As he spoke he felt within him the voice of an offended nation struggling for utterance.[1]

Eliot on the state of the nation.

He began by reminding his hearers that they met there as the great Council of the King, and that it was their duty to inform him of all that it was well for him to know. That duty it was now for them to fulfil. At home and abroad everything was in confusion. At home true religion was discountenanced. Abroad their friends had been overpowered, their enemies had prospered. Rash and ill-considered enterprises had ended in disaster. In Elizabeth's days it had not been so. She had built her prosperity upon a close alliance with France and the Netherlands. Now France was divided within itself, and driven into war with England. To this French war the Palatinate had been sacrificed. Such a policy might well be regarded rather 'a conception of Spain than begotten here with us.'

On foreign policy.

May's interpretation.

At these words Sir Humphrey May rose to interrupt the speaker. Knowing as he did how closely this French war was entwined round the King's heart, he was perhaps anxious to check words which would only widen the breach which he so much deprecated. But the House was in no mood to listen to a Privy Councillor. Eliot was encouraged with cries of "Go on!" from every side, "If he goes on," said May, "I hope that I may myself go out." "Begone, begone!" was the reply from every bench. But the spell of the great orator was upon him, and he could not tear himself away.

[1] See Mr. Forster's remarks on this speech (*Sir J. Eliot*, ii. 78). On one point I am almost inclined to go beyond him. He thinks that Eliot's 'fearless spirit could discern the safety that lay beyond the danger,' as if he had expected to frighten the King into giving way. I fancy that, judging by past experience, he could have little hope of this, and if he spoke from a sheer sense of duty, without expectation of success, his conduct is all the more admirable.

CHAP. XVIII.

1628. June 3.

When Eliot resumed he was prepared to try a higher flight than even he had hitherto ventured on. He had no longer to speak merely of disaster and mismanagement, which might be plausibly at least accounted for by the niggardliness of the Commons.

Eliot on the French war.

Striking at the very heart of the foreign policy of the Government, he asked why the moment when Denmark had been overpowered at Lutter had been chosen for the commencement of a fresh quarrel with France. Was it credible that this had been advised by the Privy Council. With full knowledge doubtless how completely the French war had been the act of Buckingham, with less knowledge, it may be, how completely it had also been the act of the King, he turned upon the councillors present, perhaps specially upon May. "Can those now," he said, "that express their troubles at the hearing of these things, and have so often told us in this place of their knowledge in the conjunctures and disjunctures of affairs, say they advised in this? Was this an act of Council, Mr. Speaker? I have more charity than to think it; and unless they make a confession of themselves, I cannot believe it."

Asks who had advised it.

Misconduct in military operations.

The main error in policy, if it was but an error, having been thus exposed, Eliot turned to the mismanagement of the war. The expedition to Cadiz, the expedition to Rhé, the latest failure at Rochelle, he painted in the gloomiest colours. Buckingham's name was not mentioned, but it must have been branded in letters of flame upon the mind of every man who sat listening there. At home, too, the court, the church, the bar, the bench, the navy, were handed over to men ignorant and corrupt; the exchequer was empty, the crown lands sold, the King's jewels and plate pawned. "What poverty," he cried, "can be greater? What neces-

sity so great? What perfect English heart is not almost dissolved into sorrow for the truth? For the oppression of the subject, which, as I remember, is the next particular I proposed, it needs no demonstration. The whole kingdom is a proof. And for the exhausting of our treasures, that oppression speaks it. What waste of our provisions, what consumption of our ships, what destruction of our men have been! Witness the journey to Algiers! Witness that with Mansfeld! Witness that to Cadiz! Witness the next![1] Witness that to Rhé! Witness the last!—And I pray God we shall never have more such witnesses.—Witness likewise the Palatinate! Witness Denmark! Witness the Turks! Witness the Dunkirkers! Witness all! What losses we have sustained! How we are impaired in munition, in ships, in men! It has no contradiction. We were never so much weakened, nor had less hope now to be restored."

Such was the terrible catalogue of grievances flung forth, one after another, in words which pierced deeply into the hearts of those who heard. To the end, Buckingham's name had not been mentioned. Whatever Eliot's secret thoughts might have been, he said nothing of reviving the impeachment of the unpopular minister. He asked that a Remonstrance—a statement of grievances, as we should now say—might be drawn up, in order that the King might be informed what the Commons thought of his policy.

A Remonstrance to be prepared.

There were many among Eliot's hearers who shrunk from so bold a step. Some thought it would be better to ask for a fuller answer to the petition. Sir Henry Marten suggested that Eliot's speech proceeded from disaffection to his Majesty, whilst others looked upon it

Feeling of the House.

[1] This contemptuous reference is to Willoughby's fleet, which only reached the Bay of Biscay.

CHAP. XVIII.

1628. June 3.

as an angry retort upon the King's answer. Eliot rose to explain. So far from his words having been called forth by the King's answer, he and others had long ago formed a resolution to call attention to these grievances when a fit opportunity occurred; and the truth of this statement, which doubtless referred to the line taken by Eliot at the private meeting before the opening of the session,[1] was attested by Wentworth and Phelips. In spite of all that had been said, Eliot's proposal was adopted, and the next day was fixed for the discussion of the Remonstrance.[2]

Bearing of the proposal.

Even as an answer to the King's reply, it might fairly be argued that Eliot's proposal was well timed. The King had claimed to be possessed of special powers above the law for the honour and safety of the realm. Such powers he had wielded for more than three years, and the Remonstrance would tell him what had come of it.

June 4. The King tries to stop the Remonstrance.

Charles fancied himself strong enough to drive back the rising tide. Believing, as he did, that all the disasters which had happened had arisen from the reluctance of the Commons to vote him money, he now sent to tell them that the session would come to an end in a week, that he had given an answer to their petition 'full of justice and grace,' and would give no other. They were therefore seriously to proceed to business, without entertaining new matters; in other words, to pass the Subsidy Bill, and let the Remonstrance alone.[3]

The House was now in Eliot's hands. The silence to which Wentworth was now self-condemned since the failure of his conciliatory efforts, was the measure of the downward progress which Charles had been making

[1] P. 201.
[2] Forster, *Sir J. Eliot*, ii. 79.
[3] *Parl. Hist.*, ii. 388.

1628.

since the days of the leadership of the member for Yorkshire. After listening to a report from the Committee of Trade[1] strongly condemnatory of the cruel treatment to which shipowners and mariners had been subjected when pressed into the King's service, the House, taking not the slightest notice of the Royal message, went into Committee on the Remonstrance.[2]

June 4. The House refuses to stop.

The next morning a sharper message was delivered from the King, positively forbidding the House to proceed with any new business which might spend greater time than remained before the end of the session, or which might 'lay any scandal or aspersion upon the State, Government, or ministers thereof.'

June 5. Sharper message from the King.

It was a terrible awakening for the leaders of the Commons; the more painful because, in their simple loyalty, they would not open their eyes to its real meaning. If they could have fully realised the fact that their King was against them; that even without Buckingham's intervention, Charles would have closed his ears to their prayers; that Charles, if he was not the originator, was the most obstinate defender of all that had been done, they might have nerved themselves with pain and sorrow to the conflict before them. It was because they could not see this that a feeling of helplessness came over them. The King, they earnestly attempted to believe, was good and wise. But they could not reach him. Between him and them stood the black cloud of Buckingham's presence, impenetrable to their wishes, and distorting every ray of light which was suffered to reach the place in which Charles remained in seclusion. Before this grim shadow, almost preternatural in its all-pervading

Distress of the House.

[1] *Commons' Journals*, i. 909; and more fully in *Harl. MSS.*, 6800, fol. 353.

[2] Except from a few words in Nethersole's letter (*S. P. Dom.*, cvi. 55) I know nothing of this debate.

CHAP. XVIII.

1628.

strength, bearded men became as children. Sobs and tears burst forth from every side of the House.

June 5. Phelips declares the misfortune of the House.

With quivering voice and broken words Phelips strove to give utterance to the thoughts within him. There was little hope, he said; for he could not but remember with what moderation the House had proceeded. "Former times," he said, *mournfully*, "have given wounds enough to the people's liberty. We came hither full of wounds, and we have cured what we could. Yet what is the return of all but misery and desolation? What did we aim at but to have served his Majesty, and to have done that which would have made him great and glorious? If this be a fault, then we are all criminous." It was their duty, he proceeded, to give advice to the King. If they were to be stopped in doing this, let them cease to be a Council. "Let us presently," he concluded by saying, "inform his Majesty that our firm intents were to show him in what danger the commonwealth and state of Christendom stands; and therefore, since our counsels are no better acceptable, let us beg his Majesty's leave every man to depart home, and pray to God to divert those judgments and dangers which too fearfully and imminently hang over our heads."

Proposes to ask leave to go home.

Perhaps it would have been better, if anything could have been better with such a king as Charles, that Phelips's proposal should have been adopted on the spot. But whatever reticence the leaders may have deliberately imposed upon themselves, there was too much angry feeling against Buckingham to be long suppressed. Eliot pointed out that there had been misrepresentation to the King, especially shown in the clause of the message forbidding them to lay aspersions on the Government. They had no such intention. "It is said also," he added, "as if we cast some aspersions

1628. June 5.

on his Majesty's ministers. I am confident no minister, how dear soever, can—— "

The sentence was never ended. Finch, the Speaker, started from his chair. He, too, felt the weight of the issues with which the moment was fraught. "There is command laid upon me," he said, with tears in his eyes, "to interrupt any that should go about to lay an aspersion on the ministers of State."

Eliot stopped by the Speaker.

What Eliot meant to say can never be known. He had too much self-command to make it likely that he was going beyond the position he had assumed in the former debate. Probably he was but about to express an opinion that no minister could stand higher with his Majesty than the needs of his subjects. But the ill-timed intervention of Finch had done more than Eliot's tongue could have done. It was one more proof how impossible it was for the Commons to reach the King.

Eliot sat down at once. If he was not to speak freely, he would not speak at all. What Eliot expressed by his silence, Digges expressed in words: "Unless we may speak of these things in Parliament, let us arise and be gone, or sit still and do nothing." Then there was a long pause. At last Rich rose to protest against the policy of silence. It was most safe for themselves, he said, but not for their constituents. Let them go to the Lords and ask them to join in the Remonstrance.

Digges declares their remaining useless.

Rich wishes to consult the Lords.

In the mood in which the members were, there were not wanting a few who thought Eliot had been to blame. It was that terrible speech of his on the 3rd,[1] they said, which had done the mischief. But the House would not hear of such an explanation. No member, it was resolutely declared, had been guilty of undutiful speech from the first day of the session. Others again essayed

[1] P. 279.

CHAP. XVIII.

1628. June 5.

to speak. Old Coke, with the tears running down his furrowed face, stood up, faltered, and sat down again. At last it was resolved to go into Committee to consider what was to be done.

The Speaker leaves the House.

Finch, thus released from his duties, asked permission to leave the House. The permission was not refused. With streaming eyes he hurried to the King to tell what he had heard and seen. To him too, and to all real friends of the prerogative, the breach between the Crown and so thoroughly loyal a House must have been inexpressibly sad.

Debate in the Committee.

The impression left by the Speaker's departure was that a dissolution was imminent. Men waxed bolder with the coming danger. "The King," said Kirton, "is as good a prince as ever reigned. It is the enemies to the commonwealth that have so prevailed with him, therefore let us aim now to discover them; and I doubt not but God will send us hearts, hands, and swords to cut the throats of the enemies of the King and State." Wentworth, rejecting Rich's proposal, moved to go straight to the King with the Remonstrance. Were they not the King's counsellors?

Coke was the next to rise, his voice no longer choked by his emotions. He was about to say that which Eliot had refrained from saying. He quoted precedent after precedent in which the Commons had done the very thing that the King had warned them against doing. Great men, Privy Councillors, the King's prerogative itself, had once not been held to be beyond the scope of Parliamentary enquiry. "What shall we do!" he cried; "let us palliate no longer. If we do, God will not prosper us. I think the Duke of Bucks is the cause of all our miseries, and till the King be informed thereof, we shall never go out with honour, or sit with honour here. That man is the grievance of grievances. Let

Coke names the Duke.

1628. June 5.

us set down the causes of all our disasters, and they will all reflect upon him." Let them not go to the Lords. Let them go straight to the King. It was not the King, but the Duke, who had penned the words, 'We require you not to meddle with State government, or the ministers thereof.' Did not the King once sanction the principle which this message condemned? Did he not, as Prince of Wales, take part as a Peer of Parliament in receiving the prosecution of Lord Chancellor Bacon and Lord Treasurer Middlesex?

Amidst expressions of approbation from every side, Coke sat down. At last the word which was on all lips had been spoken. And then, as a contemporary letter-writer expressed it, 'as when one good hound recovers the scent, the rest come in with a full cry, so they pursued it, and every one came on home, and laid the blame where they thought the fault was.' Selden but put into shape what Coke had suggested. "All this time," he said, "we have cast a mantle on what was done last Parliament; but now being driven again to look on that man, let us proceed with that which was then well begun, and let the charge be renewed that was last Parliament against him, to which he made an answer, but the particulars were sufficient that we might demand judgment on that answer only." [1]

Resolution to name Buckingham.

As Charles had made Wentworth's leadership impossible, so it seemed he would now make Eliot's leadership impossible. The mere representation of the evils of the State seemed tame after what had taken place that day. The remaining heads of the Remonstrance were hurried over, and just as a final clause, condemnatory of Buckingham, was being put to the

[1] *Parl. Hist.*, ii. 401. *Rushworth*, i. 605-610. Mead to Stuteville, June 15; *Court and Times*, i. 359. Mead is plainly mistaken in assigning Coke's speech to the 4th.

CHAP. XVIII.

1628.

vote, the Speaker reappeared with a message from the King, ordering them to adjourn till the following morning. In doubt and wonder the members departed to their homes.

June 5. The King stops the debate.

It was but eleven o'clock when the debate that morning was forcibly interrupted. It may be that if the words spoken in the Commons had reached the King alone, the Houses would have met the next day only to be dissolved. But the Commons were not alone. In the other House a message from the King demanding an adjournment had been interpreted as ominous of a dissolution. Bristol at once interposed the weight of his authority. It was indiscretion, he said, to speak of such a thing from conjecture. If it was true that the Privy Council had advised it, the Lords were greater than the Privy Council. They were the great council of the kingdom, and it was for them to lay before the King the true estate of the kingdom. There was danger from Spain, danger from France, danger from the Dunkirk privateers. "The whole Christian world," he said, "is enemy to us. We have not in all the Christian world but one port to put a boat into, Rochelle. We have been like the broken staff of Egypt to all that have relied upon us. The distress of our friends lies before us, the power and malice of our enemies. Now if we return home, when God had put it into the King's heart to call a Parliament, what disadvantage will it be unto us when our adversaries shall observe that the King and his people have three times met, and departed with no good! Whosoever shall say that a monarch can be fed by projects and imaginations, knows not of what he is speaking."[1] Bristol concluded by moving for a Select Committee to 'represent unto the King the true state of the kingdom, to be humble suitors unto him to let things

Debate in the Lords.

Bristol proposes a representation to the King.

[1] The words after "imaginations" are added by conjecture.

1628. June 6.

pass as they have done in the times of his ancestors. To be likewise suitors unto the King, that [1] if there have been any carriage of any private persons displeasing to him, he will not make a sudden end of this Parliament.' [2]

From motives of respect to the King, Bristol's motion was not formally adopted. But the Lord Keeper was directed to acquaint the King with the feeling of the House.[3]

The Lord Keeper ordered to acquaint the King with the feeling of the House.

Even Charles, self-willed as he was, could not venture to stand up against both Houses. Thanking the Lords for their respect to him in refusing to appoint the Committee which Bristol had proposed, he assured them that he was as fully aware as they were of the dangers of the kingdom—a message which drew from Essex a demand that Bristol's motion for a Committee should be put again, and from Bristol himself the expression of a hope that at least they would petition the King not to put a sudden end to the Parliament.[4]

Charles withdraws from his ground.

In the Lower House, too, a message had been received qualifying the one which had given such offence the day before. The King, according to this explanation, had no intention to debar them of their right of enquiry, but wished merely to prohibit them from raking up old offences by looking into counsel which had been tendered to him in past times. The explanation was gravely accepted. "I am now as full of joy," said Eliot, "as yesterday of another passion." But the Commons went steadily on with their Remonstrance. On the morning of the 7th they had gone so far as to enquire into the levy of Dulbier's German horse, intended, as

The Commons go on with the Remonstrance. June 7.

[1] The word 'that' is not in the *MS.*

[2] The report ends at "carriage." The meaning is gathered from Bristol's speech of the next day.

[3] *Elsing's Notes.*

[4] *Elsing's Notes.*

CHAP. XVIII.

1628. June 7.

one member said, 'to cut our throats or else to keep us at their obedience.'[1]

Intervention of the Lords.

The House of Lords again intervened. Bishop Harsnet, the author of the Lords' propositions, from which the controversy had by this time drifted so far, now stood up in defence of the Petition of Right. Hateful to the Calvinists on account of his bold attacks made in early life upon the extreme consequences of their cherished doctrine of predestination, he was no less distrusted by Laud for his refusal to entertain the extreme consequences of the opinions which they held in common. The answer to the petition, he said, was full of grace, but it did not come home or give the satisfaction which was expected. Let the Commons be asked to join in a petition to the King for another answer. Williams supported the proposal. It was rumoured, he said, that the answer was not the King's, but had been voted by the Council.[2] "I do not see," he added, "in all the little learning I have, that this is at all applicatory to the petition or any part of it." "I conceive," said Bristol, "the answer to be rather a waiving of the petition than any way satisfactory to it. I believe that those distractions and fears which since have sprung amongst us took their original from that answer." The House was unanimous in its desire. Even Buckingham was unable to oppose himself to the current. The Commons, as soon as they were invited, gladly gave their consent, and a deputation, with Buckingham at its head, was sent to ask Charles for a clear and satisfactory answer to the petition.[3] They returned with the news that the King would bring his own reply to their request at four o'clock.

The King asked for a clear answer to the petition.

[1] *Parl. Hist.*, ii. 406. *Nicholas's Notes.*

[2] "An assembly which I reverence," is the periphrasis.

[3] *Elsing's Notes. Lords' Journals*, iii. 842.

1628. June 7.

At four o'clock, therefore, on that eventful day, Charles took his seat upon the throne. The Commons came trooping to the bar, knowing not whether they were to hear the sentence of dissolution or not. They had not long to wait. "The answer I have already given you," said Charles, "was made with so good deliberation, and approved by the judgment of so many wise men, that I could not have imagined but that it should have given you full satisfaction; but to avoid all ambiguous interpretations, and to show you that there is no doubleness in my meaning, I am willing to please you in words as well as in the substance. Read your petition; and you shall have such an answer as I am sure will please you." Then after it had been read, as the shouts of applause rung out loud and clear from the Commons, the Clerk pronounced the usual words of approval, '*Soit droit fait comme est desiré.*'

Charles assents to the Petition of Right.

Charles had yet a few more words in reserve. "This," he said, "I am sure is full; yet no more than I granted you on my first answer; for the meaning of that was to confirm all your liberties; knowing, according to your own protestations, that you neither mean nor can hurt my prerogative. And I assure you that my maxim is, that the people's liberties strengthen the King's prerogative, and that the King's prerogative is to defend the people's liberties. You see how ready I have shown myself to satisfy your demands, so that I have done my part; wherefore if the Parliament have not a happy conclusion, the sin is yours; I am free from it." [1]

General joy.

Once more the acclamations of the Commons arose. The shout was taken up without as the news spread from street to street. The steeples of the City churches

[1] *Lords' Journals*, iii. 843.

CHAP. XVIII. 1628. June 7.

rang out their merriest peals. As the dusk deepened into darkness bonfires were lighted up amidst rejoicing crowds. Since the day when Charles had returned from Spain no such signs of public happiness had been seen.[1]

[1] Nethersole to the titular Queen of Bohemia, June 7; Conway to Coke, June 9; *S. P. Dom.*, cvi. 55, 71.

CHAPTER XIX.

REMONSTRANCE AND PROROGATION.

1628. June 7.

WHATEVER interpretation might still be placed by the King on the concession which he had made, it was undeniable that the House of Commons had gained a great advantage. It might still be doubtful whether, in case of necessity, the King might not break the law, but it could never again be doubtful what the law was.

Importance of the petition.

The Petition of Right has justly been deemed by constitutional historians as second in importance only to Magna Charta itself. It circumscribed the monarchy of Henry VIII. and Elizabeth as Magna Charta circumscribed the monarchy of Henry II. Alike in the twelfth and the sixteenth century the kingly power had been established on the ruins of an aristocracy bent upon the nullification of government in England. Alike in the thirteenth and the seventeenth century, the kingly power was called to account as soon as it was used for other than national ends. Like Magna Charta too, the Petition of Right was the beginning, not the end, of a revolution.

Comparison with Magna Charta.

As far as in them lay the Commons had stripped Charles of that supreme authority which he believed himself to hold. But their action had been purely negative. Somewhere or another such authority must exist above all positive law, capable of setting it aside when it comes in conflict with the higher needs of

Supreme authority in abeyance.

CHAP. XIX.

1628. June 7.

the nation. Charles was right enough in thinking that the Commons were consciously or unconsciously tending to seize upon this authority themselves; but they had not done so. They had cried, as it were, The King is dead. They had not cried, Long live the King. The old order had received a deadly blow, but it had not given place to the new. Many a stormy discussion, many a sturdy blow, would be needed before the Commons seated themselves in the place of the King.

In every nation supreme authority rests in the hands of those who best respond to the national demand for help and guidance. Would the House of Commons be able to offer this? Could it represent the wishes, the wisdom, the strength, it may be the prejudices, of the nation, as they had been represented by Elizabeth? At all events it would throw into disrepute those theories upon which the King's claim to stand above the laws was founded, and it could set forth its policy and its wishes so as to be understood of all men. On the 9th of June Pym carried up to the Lords the charges which had been gradually collected against Manwaring, and on the same day the Commons went steadily on with their Remonstrance as if nothing had happened to divert them from their purpose.

June 9. Impeachment of Manwaring.

It was certain that Manwaring would find no favour in the House of Lords. The doctrine that the King had a divine right to obedience apart from the laws of the realm was one which had failed to find support amongst the lay Peers in the discussions on the Petition of Right. Manwaring was therefore condemned to imprisonment during the pleasure of the House, to pay a fine of 1,000*l.*, to acknowledge his offence, to submit to suspension from preaching at Court for the remainder of his life, and from preaching elsewhere for three years. He was further forbidden to hold any ecclesiastical or civil office, and the King was to be asked to

June 14. Sentence against him.

issue a proclamation calling in all copies of his book in order that they might be burnt.[1]

That Manwaring should be impeached and condemned was a matter of course. His offence and his punishment are of little interest to us now; but it is of great interest to know what answer his challenge provoked, what political principle was advocated by the House of Commons in reply to the political principle which they condemned.

Pym's reply to Manwaring's declaration of principle.

The accusation had been intrusted to Pym, and by Pym's mouth the Commons spoke. "The best form of government," he said, "is that which doth actuate and dispose every part and member of a State to the common good; and as those parts give strength and ornament to the whole, so they receive from it again strength and protection in their several stations and degrees. If this mutual relation and intercourse be broken, the whole frame will quickly be dissolved and fall in pieces; and instead of this concord and interchange of support, whilst one part seeks to uphold the old form of government, and the other part to introduce a new, they will miserably consume and devour one another. Histories are full of the calamities of whole States and nations in such cases. It is true that time must needs bring about some alterations, and every alteration is a step and degree towards a dissolution. Those things only are eternal which are constant and uniform. Therefore it is observed by the best writers on this subject that those commonwealths have been most durable and perpetual which have often reformed and recomposed themselves according to their first institution and ordinance, for by this means they repair the breaches and counterwork the ordinary and natural effects of time."[2]

[1] *Parl. Hist.*, ii. 388, 410.

[2] Bacon has the same conservatism as Pym, but more appreciation

CHAP. XIX.

1628. June 14.

What then was the first institution and ordinance of the laws of England? Pym's answer was ready. "There are plain footsteps," he said, "of those laws in the government of the Saxons. They were of that vigour and force as to overlive the Conquest; nay, to give bounds and and limits to the Conqueror. . . . It is true they have been often broken, but they have been often confirmed by charters of Kings and by Acts of Parliaments. But the petitions of the subjects upon which those charters and Acts were founded, were ever Petitions of Right, demanding their ancient and due liberties, not suing for any new."

Superiority of his view.

A far nobler view this than Manwaring's. In the historical past of the English people lay the justification of its action in the present. Beyond the precedents of the lawyer and the conclusions of the divine, the eye of the statesman rested on the continuity of responsibility in the nation for the mode in which it was governed. It may be that many things seem otherwise to us than they seemed to Pym, and that we should condemn actions which to him appeared worthy of all praise. But our sympathies are with Pym and not with Manwaring. If there were faults in the House of Commons, if there was a danger of the establishment of a self-seeking aristocracy in the place of a national government, it was not from Charles that the remedy was likely to come. Whatever justification might be put forth, Charles's assumption of power had been clearly revolutionary. To conduct war and to extort money in defiance of the nation was an act which had nothing in common with those acts which had been done by former sovereigns with the tacit assent of the nation.

the need of reform. "It is good also not to try experiments in States, except the necessity be urgent, or the utility evident; and well to beware that it be the reformation that draweth on the change, and not the desire of change that pretendeth the reformation."—*Essay on Innovations.*

CHAP. XIX.

1628. June 14.

The root of the old constitution was the responsibility of the Crown to the nation, a responsibility which, it is true, was often enforced by violence and rebellion. But a view of the constitution which takes no account of those acts of violence is like a view of geology which takes no account of earthquakes and volcanoes, and there was therefore a certain amount of unconscious insincerity in the legal arguments adduced on either side. They dealt with the compacts which sanctioned the results of force, and they shrunk from the acknowledgment that the force itself, the steady determination that a king who spoke for himself and acted for himself should not be permitted to reign, was part of that mass of custom and opinion which, varying in detail from age to age, but animated in every age by the same spirit, is, for brevity's sake, called the English constitution. To the spirit of this constitution the Tudor princes had, even in their most arbitrary moods, sedulously conformed. No rulers have ever been so careful to watch the temper of the nation as Henry VIII. and Elizabeth had been. That the King was established by God himself to think and act in opposition to the thoughts and acts which it deliberately chose to think best, was a new thing in England, and even when the King was right and the nation was wrong, it was a change for the worse.

The Commons did their best to persuade themselves from time to time that every step taken in the wrong direction had been owing to the King's ministers rather than to himself. But it was growing hard for them to close their eyes much longer to the truth. A discovery was now made that Manwaring's sermons had been licensed for printing by the King's special orders, and that too against Laud's remonstrances, for

The King's part in the issue of Manwaring's book.

CHAP. XIX.

even Laud had warned him that many things in the book would be 'very distasteful to the people.'[1]

1628. June 16. Subsidies voted.

In one respect Charles had gained his object by his acceptance of the petition. As soon as it was ascertained that it was to be enrolled like any other statute, the Subsidy Bill was pushed on, and on the 16th it was sent up to the Lords.

June 9. The Remonstrance proceeded with.

Of the Remonstrance, however, Charles had not heard the last. It is true that Selden's proposal for renewing the impeachment of Buckingham was quietly dropped, but it was certain that the name of Buckingham would appear in the Remonstrance. All that Charles had gained was that the name would appear in a statement made to himself, not in an accusation addressed to the Lords.

The King, in fact, had never understood the reasons which had induced the House, under Eliot's guidance, to prepare this Remonstrance. He had fancied that it was a mere weapon of offence intended to wrest from him a better answer to the petition, which was certain to be let drop as soon as its purpose had been accomplished. He could not perceive how deeply the disasters of the years in which he had ruled England had impressed themselves upon the mind of the nation, and so far as he took account of those disasters at all he argued that they had resulted from the niggardliness of the Commons, not from the incapacity of his own ministers.

On June 11[2] the Remonstrance was finally brought

[1] *Lords' Journals*, iii. 856. Manwaring's absolute appeal to first principles would probably not be agreeable to Laud, who preferred leaving such matters to the schools, and basing his demands upon the people upon the authority of established institutions.

[2] The debate in committee is given by Nicholas, and the adoption of the Remonstrance is in the Journals of the same day. Rushworth is clearly wrong in saying the charge against Buckingham was voted on

CHAP. XIX.

1628. June 11. The Remonstrance voted.

into shape. First came the paragraphs relating to religion, including the inevitable demand for the full execution of the penal laws against the Catholics and a special complaint against the Northern Commission for compounding with Recusants, of which Sir John Savile had been the leading member, and which had been warmly attacked by Wentworth. Still more bitter was the cry against Arminianism. The Calvinistic preachers had not, it is true, been actually persecuted. But they had been discountenanced. Books written by their opponents easily found a licenser. Books written by themselves were scanned more strictly. Laud and Neile were in high favour with the King, and those who adopted their opinions were on the sure way to promotion. Before long the high places of the Church would be occupied exclusively by men whose opinions were those of a minority of the clergy and of a still smaller minority of the laity.

Attack on the Arminians.

It is easy to see that these complaints were not without foundation. It is easy to see, too, that the course of silencing the Arminians, suggested rather than advised by the Commons, would have been of little avail. But for the present the main stress of the petition was directed to another quarter. The whole history of the past three years was unrolled before the King, and after a warm debate, the blame for all the mischief was laid upon the Duke. "The principal cause," so the House declared, "of which evils and dangers we conceive to be the excessive power of the Duke of Buckingham, and the abuse of that power;[1] and we

1 b

the 13th. We here take leave of Nicholas, who gives nothing later than the 11th.

[1] These words were inserted after a proposal from Phelips that only the Duke's power, and not the abuse of his power, should be complained of.

CHAP. XIX.

1628. June 11.

humbly submit unto your Majesty's excellent wisdom, whether it be safe for yourself or your kingdoms that so great a power as rests in him by sea and land should be in the hands of any one subject whatsoever. And as it is not safe, so, sure we are it cannot be for your service; it being impossible for one man to manage so many and weighty affairs of the kingdom as he hath undertaken besides the ordinary duties of those offices which he holds; some of which, well performed, would require the time and industry of the ablest men, both in counsel and action, that your whole kingdom will afford, especially in these times of common danger. And our humble desire is further, that your excellent Majesty will be pleased to take into your princely consideration, whether in respect the said Duke hath so abused his power, it be safe for your Majesty and your kingdom to continue him either in his great offices, or in his place of nearness and counsel about your sacred person."[1]

Position taken by the Commons.

The Commons had thus returned to the position which they had taken up at the close of the last session, as soon as it become evident that the impeachment would not be allowed to take its course. They passed what in modern times would be called a vote of want of confidence in Buckingham. They brought no criminal charges. They asked for no punishment. But they demanded that the man under whose authority the things of which they complained had been done, should no longer be in a position to guide all England by his word.

On minor points Charles was willing to gratify the Commons. He allowed his ministers to give out that he was ready to discountenance the Arminians, which

[1] *Rushworth*, i. 619.

CHAP. XIX.

1628. June 11. Charles will not give up Buckingham.

he might easily do, as Laud and his friends entirely disclaimed the title. He cancelled the patent by which certain Privy Councillors had been empowered, before the meeting of Parliament, to consider the best way of raising money by irregular means,[1] and he announced that Dulbier should not bring his German horse into England.[2] But he would not give up the Duke. To abandon Buckingham was to abandon himself.

Dr. Lambe and Buckingham.

Before the remonstrance was presented to the King an event occurred which must have served to harden Charles in the belief that the movement against Buckingham was nothing more than a decent veil for an outbreak of popular anarchy which if it were not checked might sweep away his throne and all else that he held sacred. Dr. Lambe, an astrologer and quack doctor, a man too, if rumour is to be believed, of infamous life, had been consulted by Buckingham, and was popularly regarded as the instigator of his nefarious designs. Things had now come to such a pass that nothing was too bad to be believed of the Duke. Men declared without hesitation that Buckingham had caused the failure of Denbigh's expedition to Rochelle, out of fear lest, if the town were relieved, a peace might follow.[3] His luxury, his immoralities, his bragging incompetency, once the theme of Eliot's rhetoric, were now sung in ballads passed from hand to hand. In these verses it was told how he had poisoned Hamilton, Southampton, Oxford, Lennox, and even King James himself; how he had sat in a boat out of the way of danger, whilst his men were being slaughtered in the Isle of Rhé; how he was indifferent to the ravages of the

Wild stories told of the Duke.

[1] *Parl. Hist.*, ii. 417; *Lords' Journals*, iii. 862. See p. 198.

[2] *Rushworth*, i. 623.

[3] *Contarini's Despatch*, June $\frac{5}{15}$.

CHAP. XIX. 1628.

Dunkirkers and to the ruin of the country,[1] whilst he employed Dr. Lambe to corrupt by his love-charms the chastest women in England. Even at Cambridge the judicious Mead found himself treated with contempt for venturing to suggest that the Duke's faults arose from incapacity rather than from any settled purpose to betray the kingdom.[2]

June 13. Murder of Dr. Lambe.

Whilst such thoughts were abroad, Dr. Lambe stepped forth one evening from the Fortune Theatre. A crowd of London apprentices, ever ready for amusement or violence, gathered round him, hooting at him as the Duke's devil. Fearing the worst, he paid some sailors to guard him to a tavern in Moorgate Street, where he supped. When he came out he found some of the lads still standing round the door, and imprudently threatened them, telling them 'he would make them dance naked.' As he walked they followed his steps, the crowd growing denser every minute. In the Old Jewry he turned upon them with his sailors, and drove them off. The provocation thus given was too much for the cruel instinct of the mob. A rush was made at him, and he was driven for refuge into the Windmill Tavern. Stones began to fly, and the howling crowd demanded its victim. In vain the landlord disguised him before he sent him out. There was another scamper through the streets, another attempt to find refuge. The master of the second house satisfied his conscience by dismissing him with four constables to guard him. Such aid was of little avail. The helpless protectors were dashed aside. The object of popular hatred was thrown bleeding on the ground. Blows from sticks and stones and pieces of board

[1] Fairholt's Poems and Songs relating to the Duke of Buckingham *Percy Society.*

[2] Mead to Stuteville, July 12; *Court and Times*, i. 373.

snatched up for the occasion fell like rain upon his quivering flesh. After he could no longer speak to plead for mercy, one of his eyes was beaten out of its socket. No man would open his doors to receive the all but lifeless body of the detested necromancer. He was at last carried to the Compter prison, where he died on the following morning.

June 16. The King's displeasure.

Charles, when he heard the news, was greatly affected. The murderers had been heard to say that if the Duke had been there they would have handled him worse. They would have minced his flesh, and have had every one a bit of him. He summoned before him the Lord Mayor and Aldermen, bidding them to discover the offenders,[1] and he subsequently imposed a heavy fine upon the City upon their failure to detect the guilty persons.

The King's heart was hardened against the assailants of the Duke. To sift the statements of the Remonstrance, or to promise an enquiry into the cause of the late disasters, would be beneath his dignity. He determined to meet the Remonstrance of the Commons as a mere personal attack upon innocence.

Orders the proceedings in the Star Chamber against the Duke to be taken from the file.

The 17th was fixed for receiving the House. The day before Charles sent to the Star Chamber an order that all documents connected with the sham prosecution of Buckingham which had followed the last dissolution, should be removed from the file; 'that no memory thereof remain of the record against him which may tend to his disgrace.'[2]

June 17. Answers the Remonstrance.

When the Remonstrance was read, Charles answered curtly. He did not expect, he said, such a remonstrance from them after he had so graciously granted

[1] Mead to Stuteville, June 21, June 29; *Court and Times*, i. 364, 367. Diary, *S. P. Dom.*, cii. 57. *Rushworth*, i. 618.

[2] *Rushworth*, i. 626.

CHAP. XIX.

1628. June 17.

them their Petition of Right. They complained of grievances in Church and State, 'wherein he perceived they understood not what belonged to either so well as he had thought they had done. As for their grievances, he would consider of them as they should deserve.' When he had finished, Buckingham threw himself on his knees, asking permission to answer for himself. But Charles would not allow him, giving him his hand to kiss in the presence of his accusers.[1]

Contrast between Buckingham and Charles.

If it had not been too late for anything to have availed Buckingham, it might be thought that he had judged better for himself than his master had done. His way was to meet charges boldly and defiantly. Charles's way was to relapse into silence, to fall back upon his insulted dignity, and to demand the submission to his mere word which argument could alone have secured for him. His own notions were to him so absolutely true that they needed no explanation.

So far as Buckingham was able he sought to meet the charges against him. It had been rumoured in the House of Commons that the Duke had said, "Tush! it makes no matter what the Commons or Parliament doth; for without my leave and authority they shall not be able to touch the hair of a dog." In vain Buckingham protested that the slander was absolutely untrue.[2] The accusation was repeated in verses drawn up to suit the popular taste, in which the Duke was made to declare his entire independence of the popular feeling. "Meddle," he is made to say to his opponents—

Buckingham denies a slanderous story.

> "Meddle with common matters, common wrongs,
> To the House of Commons common things belongs.
> They are *extra sphæram* that you treat of now,
> And ruin to yourselves will bring, I vow,

[1] Mead to Stuteville, June 21; *Court and Times*, i. 364.
[2] *Lords' Journals*, iii. 897.

Except you do desist, and learn to bear
What wisdom ought to teach you, or your fear.
Leave him the oar that best knows how to row,
And state to him that best the state doth know.
* * * * * * *
Though Lambe be dead, I'll stand, and you shall see
I'll smile at them that can but bark at me." [1]

In reality these words applied far more correctly to the King than to Buckingham. But as long as Buckingham was in favour no man would believe how great a part Charles had in his own calamities. "Who rules the kingdom?" were the words of a pasquinade found nailed to a post in Coleman Street. "The King. Who rules the King? The Duke. Who rules the Duke? The devil. Let the Duke look to it." [2]

Tonnage and poundage.

Under the influence of the feeling provoked by the rejection of the Remonstrance the Commons went into Committee on the Bill for the grant of tonnage and poundage which had been brought in at the beginning of the session, but had been postponed on account of the pressure of other business. With the exception of the merest fragment, no record of the debates in this Committee has reached us; but we learn from a contemporary letter [3] that the Commons, whilst making a liberal grant, equal to the whole of the customs and imposts put together, wished to alter the incidence of some of the rates, partly because they considered them too heavy on certain articles, partly for the preservation of their own right to make the grant.

Dissatisfaction of the King.

As soon as it appeared that the work to which they had set themselves would take two or three months, they proposed to pass a temporary Bill to save the rights which they claimed, leaving all further discussion

[1] Poems on Buckingham; *Percy Society*, 30.
[2] Mead to Stuteville, June 29; *Court and Times*, i. 367.
[3] Nethersole to Elizabeth, June 30; *S. P. Dom.*, cviii. 52.

CHAP. XIX.

1628. June 19.

till the next session. When the King refused to assent to this proposal, they expressed a wish that they might have an adjournment instead of a prorogation. In this way the Act, when finally passed at their next meeting, would take effect from the beginning of the session in the past winter, and the illegality, as they held it, of the actual levy would be covered by it.

It may be that the Commons did not at the time mean more than they said, or that they had no fixed intention of using their claim to be the sole originators of the right to levy customs duties in order to compel the King to attend to their political grievances. But it may very well have seemed to Charles that it was so; and the more persistent the Lower House was in asserting its right, the more determined he was not to give way on a point or concession which would make it impossible for him to govern the kingdom except in accordance with its views. If the Commons saw fit at their next meeting to vote him less than the old tonnage and poundage and the new impositions put together, he would be landed in a perpetual deficit, even if a treaty of peace could be signed at once with France and Spain. And for Charles a perpetual deficit meant the expulsion of Buckingham from his counsels and the domination of Puritanism in the Church; in other words, it meant his own surrender of that Royal authority which had been handed down to him from his predecessors—a surrender far more complete than he had contemplated in giving his assent to the Petition of Right.

June 23. The prorogation determined on.

Accordingly, on the 23rd he sent a message once more declaring that he had fixed a date for the prorogation. The Houses might sit till the 26th, but they should sit no longer.

The Commons at once proceeded to draw up another Remonstrance. They would not have complained, they asserted, if an adjournment and not a prorogation had

. been offered. In that case the matter would have been taken up when they met again, and the Act when passed would have given a retrospective sanction to all duties levied under it since the commencement of the session. The Commons then proceeded to declare that no imposition ought to be laid upon the goods of merchants, exported or imported, without common consent by Act of Parliament; which, they said to the King, 'is the right and inheritance of your subjects, founded not only upon the most ancient and original constitutions of this kingdom, but often confirmed and declared in divers statute laws.' They had hoped that a Bill might have passed to satisfy the King in the present session. "But not being now able," they concluded by saying, "to accomplish this their desire, there is no course left unto them, without manifest breach of their duty both to your Majesty and their country, save only to make this humble declaration: That the receiving of tonnage and poundage and other impositions not granted by Parliament, is a breach of the fundamental liberties of this kingdom, and contrary to your Majesty's Royal answer to their late Petition of Right; and therefore they do most humbly beseech your Majesty to forbear any further receiving the same; and not to take it in ill part from those of your Majesty's loving subjects who shall refuse to make payment of any such charges without warrant of law demanded. And as, by this forbearance, your most excellent Majesty shall manifest unto the world your Royal justice in the observation of your laws, so they doubt not but hereafter, at the time appointed for their coming together again, they shall have occasion to express their great desire to advance your Majesty's honour and profit."[1]

June 28. Remonstrance on tonnage and poundage.

[1] *Parl. Hist.*, ii. 431.

CHAP. XIX. 1628.

Rather than listen to such words as these, Charles determined to hasten the end of the session by a few hours. Hurriedly, and without taking time to put on the usual robes, he entered the House of Lords early the next morning, almost as soon as the Peers had met.

June 26. The King's speech.

"My Lords and Gentlemen," he said, when the Commons had been summoned, "it may seem strange that I come so suddenly to end this session; wherefore, before I give my assent to the Bills, I will tell you the cause; though I must avow that I owe an account of my actions but to God alone. It is known to every one that a while ago the House of Commons gave me a Remonstrance, how acceptable every man may judge; and for the merit of it I will not call that in question, for I am sure no wise man can justify it.

"Now, since I am certainly informed that a second Remonstrance is preparing for me to take away my chief profit of tonnage and poundage—one of the chief maintenances of the Crown—by alleging that I have given away my right thereof by my answer to your petition; this is so prejudicial unto me that I am forced to end this session some few hours before I meant it, being willing not to receive any more Remonstrances to which I must give a harsh answer.

"And since I see that even the House of Commons begins already to make false constructions of what I granted in your petition, lest it might be worse interpreted in the country I will now make a declaration concerning the true meaning thereof:—

"The profession of both Houses, in time of hammering this petition, was no ways to entrench upon my prerogative, saying they had neither intention nor power to hurt it: therefore it must needs be conceived I granted no new, but only confirmed the ancient liberties of my subjects; yet to show the clearness of

1628. June 26.

my intentions, that I neither repent nor mean to recede from anything I have promised you, I do here declare that those things which have been done whereby men had some cause to suspect the liberty of the subjects to be trenched upon—which indeed was the first and true ground of the petition—shall not hereafter be drawn into example for your prejudice; and in time to come, in the word of a King, you shall not have the like cause to complain.

"But as for tonnage and poundage, it is a thing I cannot want, and was never intended by you to ask, never meant, I am sure, by me to grant.

"To conclude, I command you all that are here to take notice of what I have spoken at this time to be the true intent and meaning of what I granted you in your petition, but especially you, my Lords the Judges,—for to you only, under me, belongs the interpretation of laws; for none of the House of Commons, joint or separate—what new doctrine soever may be raised—have any power either to make or declare a law without my consent."[1]

Parliament prorogued.

After the Royal assent had been given to a few Bills the session was formally brought to an end by prorogation to October 20. It was the first time in his reign that he had ended a session otherwise than by a dissolution. Yet the crisis was more serious, the breach more complete and hopeless, than ever before. In 1625 the King had been asked by the Commons to take counsel with persons upon whom dependence could be placed. In 1626 he had been asked to dismiss one unpopular minister from his service. In 1628 his whole policy was to be changed at home and abroad, his whole personal feeling was to be sacrificed by the condemna-

Breach between the King and the Commons.

[1] *Lords' Journals*, iii. 879. The last clause is corrected from *Parl. Hist.*, ii. 434.

CHAP. XIX.

1628. June 26.

tion of Laud and Neile as well as of the great Duke himself. Statesmen and divines who were pleasing to the Commons were to be promoted. Statesmen and divines who were displeasing to the Commons were to be discouraged and silenced. Their will was to be the rule by which all that was to be taught and all that was to be done in England was from henceforward to be gauged. And this claim to sovereignty, for it was nothing less, was backed by the ominous claim to relieve individual persons from the duty of paying to the Crown dues which, though they had been declared illegal by a resolution of the House of Commons, had been declared to be legal by the Judges. It would have taxed the Commons to the uttermost, if the opportunity had been afforded them, to answer the King within the lines of existing constitutional practice. That the Judges, and not the King, were to decide questions affecting the liberty of the subject had been the point pressed most firmly in the debates on the Petition of Right. And now they proceeded to ignore entirely the fact that the unreversed decision of the Judges in the case of impositions was clearly on the King's side. If the Commons were to suspend the payment of these duties by their own resolution in the face of a judicial decision, why might they not suspend the operation of any law whatever against which they entertained objections? And, unless new checks were provided, what would such government by the resolutions of a single House lead to but the tyranny which enabled Cromwell to turn the key on the expelled Long Parliament, and which in the following century roused the thinking part of the nation in defence of a man so unworthy as Wilkes?

Charles formally in the right.

Was tonnage and poundage included in the Petition of Right?

Nor was it only in his resolution to leave the interpretation of the laws to the Judges that Charles took ground which was at least formally defensible. That

the words of the Petition of Right, praying that 'no man hereafter be compelled to make or yield any gift, loan, benevolence, tax, or such like charge, without common consent by Act of Parliament,' ought to have covered the case of customs duties is a proposition from which those who live in the nineteenth century, with their minds unconsciously steeped in the doctrines of political economy, would hardly be inclined to dissent. If a payment made on importation of silk or glass falls, as it certainly does, with even heavier weight upon the consumer, than an income tax or subsidy of like amount, its imposition ought beyond doubt to be regulated by the same considerations as those which refer an income tax or a subsidy to the consent of Parliament. But in 1628 it was notorious that the Crown lawyers had for many years been arguing that a customs duty was something altogether different in kind from 'a tax or such like charge,' and therefore something which, as falling upon goods before their entrance into the kingdom or after their exit from it, could be imposed by the mere prerogative of the Crown. When Charles said that in granting the petition he had never intended to yield on this point, he undoubtedly said nothing less than the truth. And he might have said even more than he did. It is as certain as anything can well be that the Commons never had any intention to include the question of tonnage and poundage in the Petition of Right. The Tonnage and Poundage Bill had been brought in early in the session. From time to time it had been mentioned, but, except a few words from Phelips, nothing had been said to give it any sort of prominence. What would have been easier than, by the addition of one or two expressions to the petition, to include the levy of these duties in the grievances of the House? And yet nothing of the

CHAP XIX.

1628. June 26.

kind was done, though the words of the petition, as was known to every lawyer, if not to every member in the House, were such as would not be acknowledged by the Crown to cover the case of tonnage and poundage. The insertion of the appeal to the Petition of Right in the final Remonstrance, can therefore only be regarded as a daring attempt to take up new ground which would place the right of the House above that decision of the Court of Exchequer in the last reign which they had hitherto contested in vain.[1]

The case for the Commons.

It by no means follows, however, that the Commons, if formally in the wrong, may not have been materially in the right. Legal decisions cannot bind a nation for ever, and the power of saying the last word, with all the terrible responsibilities which weigh upon those who pronounce it, must be with those by whom the nation is most fully represented. At least the House of Commons had shown that they had confidence in the English people. In every petition which had come before them relating to the exercise of the franchise, they had always decided in favour of the most extended right of voting in their power to acknowledge. Great as was the influence of wealthy landowners in returning members to the House, those members had no wish to be anything else than the representatives of the nation.[2] And with the nation their conservatism placed them at a great advantage as the defenders of what to that

[1] The wording of this clause in the petition is 'that no man hereafter be compelled to make or yield any gift, loan, benevolence, tax, or such like charges without common consent by Act of Parliament.' In the Tonnage and Poundage Act of the Long Parliament, we hear 'that no subsidy, custom, impost, or any charge whatsoever ought to be laid or imposed upon any merchandise exported or imported.' Are we to be told that the framers of the Petition of Right were so ignorant as to omit the proper terms to exclude impositions? Since this was written I have seen the Bills and answers in the Exchequer *in Chambers'* case in 1626. The merchants' counsel make no appeal to the Petition of Right.

[2] For the results of this work in Committee I must refer to Mr. Forster. *Sir J. Eliot*, ii. 119.

generation was the old religion and the old law. In his resistance to Calvinist dogmatism, in his desire to make the forces of the nation more easily available for what he conceived to be national objects, Charles was the advocate of change and innovation. His weakness lay in his utter ignorance of men, in his incapacity to subordinate that which was only desirable to that which was possible, and above all, in his habitual disregard of that primary axiom of government, that men may be led though they cannot be driven. He looked upon the whole world through a distorting lens. If Buckingham was far from being the scoundrel which popular opinion imagined him to be, his failures could not be ascribed, as Charles thought fit to ascribe them, to mere accident. If Calvinistic orthodoxy must, sooner or later, be struck down in England, it was not from Laudian uniformity that the blow could come. In Charles blindness, narrow-mindedness, and obstinacy, combined with an exaggerated sense of the errors of his opponents, were laying the sure foundations of future ruin. And then would come the turn of the Commons, the day when they too would learn that sovereignty is only permanently entrusted to those who can represent the nation with wisdom as well as with sympathy. The secret of the future was with those who could guide England into the sure haven of religious liberty. For it was not enough to say that the Commons represented England in 1628 as well as Elizabeth represented England in 1588. Elizabeth at least took care that all manner of complaints should reach her ears, and that no man should be excluded from her Privy Council on account of his opinions. If the preponderance in the constitution was to pass from the King to the House of Commons, many a compensating change would be needed before the great alteration could be safely effected. Above all, opinion must be set free to an

CHAP. XIX. 1628.

extent of which Pym and Coke never dreamed, if it were only that the nation might itself receive that enlightenment which had in old times been thought necessary for the sovereign.

Such considerations, however, were still in the future. Men were beginning to feel and sometimes to act as if some constitutional change were necessary. But they had not yet learned to give verbal expression to their thoughts. And if Charles was still sovereign of England in the eyes of others, more especially was he sovereign in his own eyes. Unhappily he did not see in past events a reason for acting so as to regain the hearts of his people.

Ecclesiastical appointments.

Having the opportunity of flinging defiance in the face of the Commons, he chose this precise moment to place in high positions men who were most unpopular. Not long before Neile had been transferred from Durham to Winchester. And now Montaigne, the old, infirm, luxurious Bishop of London, who was at the moment

June.

best known as the licenser of Manwaring's sermons,

July.

was promoted first to Durham, and then to the Archbishopric of York;[1] and the See of London, with all its enormous influence over a more than ordinarily Calvinistic clergy and people, was handed over to Laud.[2] Howson, one of Laud's chief supporters amongst the Bishops, was raised to the important See of Durham;[3] Buckeridge, another of his supporters, having been recently translated to Ely.[4] But the promotion which gave the greatest offence was undoubtedly that of Richard Montague to the Bishopric of Chichester.[5] . Whatever Montague's merits may have been, a wise king would not have chosen such a moment to promote a man so unpopular. But the circumstance which should have told most against him was doubtless that which most

[1] Date of *congé d'élire*, June 5. [2] July 4.
[3] July 4. [4] April 8. [5] *Congé d'élire*, July 8.

recommended him to Charles's favour. The Puritans must be made to understand that they had no standing ground in the English Church. And how could that be brought more clearly before their eyes than by the promotion of a man who openly declared them to be a usurping faction?

Scarcely less unwise was Charles's course with Manwaring. It can hardly be wondered that he desired to relieve the unlucky divine from the penalties which had befallen him for advocating a doctrine which in the King's eyes had only been pushed too far. Charles was indeed careful to mark his dissent from the extreme form which that doctrine had taken. In the pardon which he caused to be drawn up for Manwaring, he stated that the ground on which it was based was his recantation of the most objectionable part of his opinions.[1] But Charles did not stop here. He conferred upon Manwaring the rectory of Stanford Rivers, just vacated by Montague,[2] again confirming the assertion of the Commons, that promotion in the Church was becoming the exclusive property of that section whose opinions were regarded with abhorrence by the majority of the clergy and of the religious laity.

July 6. Manwaring's pardon.

These promotions in the Church had been made in the first swing of indignation against the Puritans, to whom Charles and Buckingham[3] traced all their calamities. Of the two men, Buckingham, though his impetuousness and self-confidence were perpetually leading him astray, was more accessible than Charles to statesmanlike considerations. When Charles was inclined to treat the unpopularity of his government as a matter of no moment, and to regard the objections

[1] The King to Heath, July 6; *S. P. Dom.*, cix. 42.

[2] Docquet, July 18.

[3] Laud, in his *History of the Troubles* (*Works*, iv. 273), says that Montague's appointment was procured by Buckingham.

CHAP. XIX.

1628. July.

Buckingham's foreign policy.

raised against his proceedings with the cool contempt of silence, Buckingham was always ready to give a reason for his actions, with the firm assurance that he needed only a fair hearing to set him right with those who disapproved of his conduct. To him, too, the war in which he had engaged was now a matter rather of necessity than of enthusiasm, and he had for some time been seeking to limit its operations. The correspondence between Gerbier and Rubens had continued to give hopes that Spain would still be induced by its jealousy of France to make peace with England; and, whatever Buckingham may have thought of the matter, the sanguine mind of Charles was not without some hopes of obtaining in this way the restitution of the Palatinate and an acknowledgment of the independence of the Dutch Republic.[1] Circumstances, too, had occurred in Italy which made it not impossible that Spain might be brought to make unusual concessions. In December the Duke of Mantua had died, leaving as the undoubted heir to his possessions a distant kinsman, the Duke of Nevers, whose family had long been settled in France. Against this extension of French influence in Italy the Emperor interfered, claiming the right, as King of Italy, to dispose of vacant fiefs, a right which he was inclined to exercise, as far as Mantua was concerned, in favour of another candidate who would have been entirely under the influence of Spain. At the same time the Duke of Savoy, who had lately been swinging round in his political alliances, proposed to divide with Spain the territory of Montferrat, which had formed part of the dominions of the deceased Duke.

Negotiations with Spain.

The succession of Mantua.

April. Carlisle's embassy.

In April Carlisle had left England on an extraordi-

[1] The papers translated in Sainsbury's *Rubens* should be compared with *Contarini's Despatches*, after making allowance for the anti-Spanish feeling of the Venetian, and his consequent tendency to suspect all sorts of treachery in Charles and Buckingham.

1628. April.

nary mission. Whether the proposals made to Spain succeeded or failed, Charles was still anxious to push on the war in all directions. Though it was a point of honour with him to succour Rochelle at all risks, he would have gladly saved the King of Denmark and the German Protestants as well, if he had only known how to do it. Carlisle was therefore ordered to stir up the Duke of Lorraine against France, and to go on to Turin in order to take advantage of the disturbances in Italy to embitter the rising quarrel between France and Spain, and thus to leave room for the freer action of England at Rochelle and in the North of Germany.[1]

June. Warlike projects.

Whatever might come of these various negotiations, the idea of a forced retirement from Continental affairs was not entertained either in the Court or the Council of Charles. As soon as the acceptance of the Petition of Right had given assurance that the subsidies would be really voted, the Privy Council began to discuss the best mode of sending a force to assist the King of Denmark to maintain himself in Glückstadt and Crempe, which were still holding out. Morgan's men who had surrendered at Stade were to be employed for the purpose; and Dulbier's horse, which could not now be landed in England, were to be kept in Germany or the Netherlands, in order that they might be used in defence of the North German Protestants as soon as Rochelle had been either captured or relieved.[2]

July. Prospects of peace with France

The belief, in fact, was rapidly gaining ground that the war with France would not be of long continuance. It was hardly thought possible that the great expedition now

[1] Carlisle's instructions, March 10; *Harl. MSS.*, 1584, fol. 173.

[2] Conway to Carleton, June 7, 10; *S. P. Holland.* Morgan's men were to be reduced to one regiment of 1,500 men, and were offered temporarily to the Dutch, to be paid by England, and lodged and fed by the States General. D. Carleton to the States General, July $\frac{6}{16}$; *Add. MSS.*, 17,677, M. fol. 256.

CHAP. XIX. 1628. July.

preparing should fail to relieve Rochelle; and if Rochelle were once relieved, whether peace were formally concluded with France or not, there would be no further need for any great exertions in that quarter. If, on the other hand, the attempt ended in failure, Rochelle must of necessity submit, and the same result would ensue. In either case, Charles would be at liberty to turn his attention to Germany.

and with Spain.

The only question therefore was whether the negotiations with Spain should be encouraged. Buckingham had now veered round to his earlier policy of 1622, and was hoping everything from the friendliness of Spain. "Let us make peace with Spain and settle the affairs of the Palatine," he said to the Savoyard ambassador, the Abbot of Scaglia, "and then the Dutch will do as we please." At all events, he assured the Abbot, there should be no peace with France till an answer had been received from Spain.[1] It was finally arranged that Endymion Porter, once the messenger who had made arrangements for Charles's journey to Madrid, should make his way to Spain in order to come to an understanding with Olivares on the proposed peace, and to assure him that, if it was thought necessary, Buckingham would come in person to carry on the negotiation.[2] The hope entertained in England seems to have been that the Spaniards would throw their whole strength into Italy, thus leaving Germany free.

Charles informs the Prince of Orange.

Buckingham was far more anxious than Charles for the success of these negotiations. Yet not long after the prorogation, Charles sent a message to the Prince of Orange, informing him that, 'being unable to bear the

[1] Statement enclosed in a letter from the Infanta Isabella to Philip IV., June, $\frac{\text{Aug. } 27}{\text{Sept. } 6}$; *Brussels MSS.*

[2] The Infanta Isabella to Philip IV., Oct. $\frac{14}{24}$; *Brussels MSS.*

burden of war against two such great kings," he had resolved to listen to the Spanish overtures for a treaty in which the restoration of the Palatinate and the pacification of the Netherlands would be expressly included.[1] The proposal was received with astonishment and indignation at the Hague, where the circumstance that Carlisle in passing through Brussels had an audience of the Infanta was considered as enough to indicate the intention of Charles to form a separate peace. The Dutch ambassadors in England were accordingly instructed to remonstrate all the more warmly against any such purpose, because it was believed by the States General that even a peace in which they were themselves included would be most deleterious to their interests, as leaving the Spaniards free to act in aid of the Emperor in Germany. Naturally enough, too, the Dutch found a warm advocate in the Venetian ambassador, to whom Charles's project of putting an end to the troubles of the North by fanning the flames of war in Italy appeared to be an act of the blackest ingratitude. Neither he nor the Dutch ambassadors were fully satisfied with Charles's assurances that nothing should be done without the knowledge of his allies. Yet there is no reason to doubt Charles's sincerity. For he had scarcely as yet opened his eyes to the absolute necessity of putting an end to the war on account of the poverty of his exchequer, and he was likely enough to flatter himself that it was in his power to continue fighting on his own terms, and to reject any offers from Spain which might be disagreeable to his sense of right.[2]

[1] Extract from a despatch of the Prince of Orange in *Contarini's Despatch* of July $\frac{18}{28}$.

[2] The Dutch Ambassadors to the States General, $\frac{\text{July } 22}{\text{Aug. } 1}$; *Add. MSS.*, 17,677, M. fol. 266; *Contarini's Despatch*, July $\frac{18}{28}$, $\frac{\text{July } 28}{\text{Aug. } 7}$.

CHAP. XIX.

1628. July. Changes in the Government.

It is impossible to disconnect these diplomatic efforts from the personal changes which at the same time took place in the Government. The anxiety for the future which led Buckingham to attempt to impose a limit upon his military operations abroad, was also shown in his desire to meet Parliament, when it re-assembled, in something like a conciliatory spirit. In the King's present temper it would be impossible to expect that Charles would consent to give much satisfaction to the Puritans. But it might be possible to restore order to the finances if once success at Rochelle should have limited the extent of the war, and it might be possible also to gain the goodwill of men whose names would seem to be a guarantee for the strict execution of the Petition of Right, and who would yet be the last to acquiesce in the claim of the House of Commons to direct the external policy of the kingdom.

Weston, Lord Treasurer.

Such men were to be found in the leaders of the majority of the House of Lords. Bristol and Arundel were therefore restored to favour, and Weston, who was practically one in policy with them, became Lord Treasurer. Marlborough, old and thoroughly inefficient, found a place as President of the Council, and Manchester became Privy Seal, Worcester having died some months before. It was certain that the influence of these men would be exerted in favour of economy and peace, and that they would give their countenance to an understanding with the House of Commons if it were still possible without diminishing that which they regarded as the legitimate authority of the King. A paragraph in a letter written by Weston to the Duke, doubtless expressed the feelings of the others as well. "I long to see you at home again with honour, in a quiet and settled Court, studying his Majesty's affairs, which

require two contrary things to cure them—rest and vigilancy." [1]

CHAP. XIX.

1628. July.

The letter-writers of the day are full of news of these changes at Court, and of others which have still less interest in our eyes. On one promotion, which has never ceased to engage the attention of Englishmen, they are entirely silent. Not one of them notices the fact that on July 22 Sir Thomas Wentworth became Lord Wentworth, and was, on Weston's introduction, received into favour by Charles.

July 22. Wentworth created a Peer.

From that time to this no word has been found too hard for the great apostate, the unworthy deserter of the principles of his youth. Those who have studied the true records of the session which had just come to an end are aware that he was neither an apostate nor a deserter. The abuses struck at by the Petition of Right he regarded as prejudicial to government as well as injurious to the subject. When they had been swept away he was free to take his own course. And that course must have been greatly determined by the proceedings of the Commons in the last days of the session. With Puritanism he had no sympathy whatever. He had no confidence in the House of Commons as an instrument of government, and must have regarded its claim to strip the Crown of tonnage and poundage, and its declaration that subjects were released from the obligation of paying those dues, as a proclamation inviting to anarchy. But if he thought the Lower House unfit to govern England, he was equally of opinion that Buckingham was unfit to govern England. We may well believe, therefore, that he had no anxiety to accept a share in the responsibilities of a Privy Councillor's place at a time when the duties of a Privy Councillor were reduced to the uncongenial task

Was he an apostate?

[1] Weston to Buckingham, Aug. 18; *S. P. Dom.*, cxiii. 14.

CHAP. XIX.

1628. June.

of echoing the words of the all-powerful minister. Many months were yet to pass before Wentworth would be asked to take his seat at the Council board.[1] The position which he was now called upon to occupy exactly suited his present mood. His peerage removed him from the House of Commons, where he had been isolated ever since the failure of his effort to mediate between the Crown and the nation. In the House of Lords he would find, in the lately formed majority, a body of men with whom he could cordially co-operate. Bristol and Arundel were as opposed as he was to the extravagances by which the policy of the Crown had lately been disfigured, whilst they were of one mind with himself in resenting any attempt of the House of Commons to make itself master of the State.

But if it is likely enough that Wentworth had no immediate wish to gain that admittance to the Council which was denied him by Charles, it is also likely that he contemplated at a not distant future, a higher post than any which was for the present open to him. No man knew better than he that the war must soon come to an end for want of supplies, and that the policy of abstention from interference with the Continent which he had advocated from the beginning would be forced upon Charles. When peace was restored the hour of Wentworth would have come. For the present he was content with the promise that he should before long succeed the Earl of Sunderland as President of the Council of the North. At York he would be far removed from all responsibility for the general govern-

His expected Presidentship of the North.

[1] That he became a Privy Councillor at this time is a mistake. Sir G. Radcliffe (*Strafford Letters*, ii. App. 430) having put together the two years 1628 and 1629, seems to say that he became a Privy Councillor in Michaelmas Term, 1628. The true date, as we learn from the *Council Register*, is Nov. 10, 1629, a fact of considerable importance in an estimate of Wentworth's character.

ment. At York, too, he would be able to carry out those principles which he had professed in the House of Commons. One of the grave complaints of the Lower House at the close of the session had been against the leniency shown by Sunderland to the Recusants, and Wentworth's voice had been raised as loudly as Pym's against leniency to the Recusants. In times of difficulty Charles was always ready to throw the Recusants over, and there was an understanding between Charles and Wentworth that, in this matter at least, the will of the House of Commons should prevail.

Wentworth as a Parliamentary leader.

To Wentworth himself this temporary abstraction from all public consideration of national affairs was doubtless extremely grateful. We are tempted to ask whether it was equally beneficial to the nation. In the last session he alone amongst the leaders of the House had shown anything like powers of constructive statesmanship. Coke and Eliot, Pym and Phelips, had been content with the negation of misgovernment. Their wish was simply that the law and religion of England should remain as it was. Wentworth had not shown himself content with this. An active, wise, and reforming Government was the ideal after which he strove from first to last.

In that session, too, Wentworth had developed powers for which those who know him only in his later life must have some difficulty in giving him credit. The impetuous haughtiness of his disposition had been curbed before that great assembly which he was learning to lead. There he could be silent and patient, could watch his opportunity till the time arrived when he could express his special thought in harmony with the thoughts of those around him. Whatever mistakes may have been committed in judging Wentworth's career, those are not wrong who hold that his leader-

CHAP. XIX.

1628.

ship of the Commons in the early part of the session of 1628 was the brightest, noblest period of his life.

Causes which estranged him from the House of Commons.

From all this Wentworth was now cut off, not by his peerage or by the allurements of power, but by the impossibility of finding a common ground upon which the King and the House of Commons could work together. If Charles had abandoned him, as he was to abandon him again, he was still drawn to Charles by every tendency of his nature. He could persuade himself, as the Commons had persuaded themselves in 1625, that Charles had erred from want of counsel, and he could hope to breathe into his soul a higher, loftier spirit. Even whilst he had played the foremost part amongst the Commons, he had never been one with them in heart. He could make use of their power over the grant of subsidies to put an end to the folly and violence of which he complained. But he could not lift up the standard of Puritanism as Pym or Eliot could lift it up. He could not believe in the capacity for government of a House composed for the most part, as it was of necessity, of men of ordinary abilities. He could not see that in the face of a Government which is hurrying a nation against its will into a path from which it recoils, the mere conservatism of the Lower House, the simple determination to stand in the old paths and to cling to the old familiar religious and political traditions, may be, for the moment, the highest political virtue.

His time not yet come.

Wentworth's acceptance of a peerage marked to a great extent the choice which he had made. But more than thirteen months, momentous months for England, were to elapse before he took his place on the Privy Council and finally threw in his lot with Charles. As yet Buckingham stood in the way. A Council controlled by a minister so incapable and so headstrong was no place for Wentworth.

CHAPTER XX.

ASSASSINATION OF THE DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM.

1628. May.

WOULD the policy foreshadowed in the names of Bristol and Weston be sufficient to save the King from the difficulties which would stare him in the face when Parliament met again? Doubtless there would be an attempt to make some compromise about tonnage and poundage. But what was to be done about the religious difficulty? There was one man at least in the party which had played so stirring a part in the House of Lords who had no confidence in the system of giving promotion to a small minority amongst the clergy. Williams had sense enough to see that the favour shown to Manwaring and Montague was no road to a settled Government. For the high dogmatic ways of Calvinism he had little taste; but he could not ignore the fact that Calvinism was a great power in England, and he had too much of the instinct of a statesman to treat with contempt the religion of the large majority of the English people.

Views of Williams.

Already, before the session was at an end, overtures had been made to Williams by Buckingham's mother. The Countess had in old days been on familiar terms with Williams, and she may well have looked at that sagacious counsellor as the most likely man to save her son from the ruin which she saw approaching. Before the end of May, at a time when the Petition of Right,

Overtures of the Countess of Buckingham.

CHAP. XX.

1628. June. Reconciliation between Buckingham and Williams.

if not accepted by the King, had been definitively accepted by the House of Lords, she had a long interview with him, whether at her son's instigation or not we cannot say.[1] The result was an interview in which Williams, being allowed to kiss the Duke's hand, made use of the opportunity to urge the wisdom of a policy of indulgence towards the Puritans.

Unless there is some error in the report which has reached us, Williams had already recommended that Eliot rather than Wentworth should be selected to receive tokens of the Royal favour. And though it may be doubted whether Eliot, as matters stood, would have responded to the call, the suggestion, if it was really made, showed a clear insight into the political situation. The fact that English Calvinism existed was one which no wise Government could pass by, and though Williams would not have been likely to advise Charles to silence Laud and Montague to please the House of Commons, he would have advised that Laud and Montague should not be permitted to impose their opinions on the rest of the clergy. But Williams would have changed his nature if some intrigue had not been mingled with the wise counsel which he gave. He suggested that his reconciliation with Buckingham should be veiled in profound secresy, in order that when he supported a compromise on the dispute about tonnage and poundage in the next session, he might speak with greater authority as an independent member of the Upper House.[2]

[1] The fact of the interview between them is all that is known. Woodward to Windebank, May 28; *S. P. Dom.*, cv. 55.

[2] *Hacket*, ii. 80, 83. Mr. Hallam, who has been followed by Mr. Disraeli and Mr. Forster, fancied that this promise of support referred to Williams's behaviour in the debates on the Petition of Right; whereas anyone who will read Hacket's words with the least attention will see that it refers to the 'next session.' Williams's conduct is, perhaps,

CHAP. XX.

1628. June.

But whatever may have been the truth about the proposal made relating to Eliot, there can be no doubt that Williams's counsel was worthy of acceptance. As far as it is possible to argue from cause to consequence, if Williams had been trusted by Charles instead of Laud, there would have been no civil war and no dethronement in the future.

Buckingham's difficulties.

It is needless to pursue the speculation further. How could Eliot trust the overtures of a King who had just given a bishopric to Montague and a rich living to Manwaring? Nor could Williams be sure even of Buckingham. For if Williams could speak of wise toleration, he could not speak otherwise than as an advocate of peace, and peace would be the ruin of Buckingham. All his life he had been planning some effective blow upon the Continent, some brilliant achievement which was to fix upon himself the admiring gaze of a whole Continent. How could he settle down to the ordinary drudgery of attending to the administration of the law, of balancing arguments for or against religious liberty, of improving the finances, and banishing corruption from the machinery of government? On all these questions Williams and Laud, Wentworth and Weston, would have something to say. The brilliant Duke, the man who had for three years been in the King's stead in the eyes of the nation, would have to sit as a learner at the feet of men towards whom he had hitherto played the part of a providence upon earth.

Carleton's influence.

There was one man, with little real knowledge of England, who was eager to lead him in another direction. In the middle of June Carleton had returned from the Hague. He soon gained Buckingham's entire

open to censure, but it does not deserve all the blame which has been bestowed upon it. He was perfectly straightforward about the petition.

CHAP. XX.

1628. July 25. He is raised to a Viscountcy.

confidence, and received from him a promise that before long he should be Secretary in place of Conway, whose health had lately become impaired. He was soon raised, as Viscount Dorchester, to a higher step in the peerage. The new Viscount was too completely dependent on Court favour to advocate a policy which would be unpalatable to his patron. But there could be no doubt that if he found a favourable moment he would advocate, not a general peace such as Wentworth and Williams desired, but a peace with France which would enable Buckingham to turn his attention to Germany and to reconquer popularity by achieving the recovery of the Palatinate.[1]

Buckingham's surrender of the Cinque Ports.

One step was taken by Buckingham to conciliate popular opinion. His retention of many offices had long been matter of complaint, and he now divested himself of the Wardenship of the Cinque Ports. But that which might have gained him credit in 1625 could gain him no credit now, even if he had not chosen as his successor Suffolk, the cowardly Peer who had brought a false charge against Selden, and had shrunk from supporting the accusation.[2]

[1] After Buckingham's death Dorchester wrote as follows: "My private respects are many testimonies of his love, and none greater than a purpose he declared unto me upon my last return from your Majesty, and hath since often reiterated unto me, of making me by his favour with the King our gracious master, an instrument of better days than we have seen of late, he having had a firm resolution, which he manifested to some other persons in whom he reposed trust and confidence, as well as to myself, to walk new ways, but upon old grounds and maxims both of religion and policy, finding his own judgment to have been misled by errors of youth and persuasions of some persons he began better to know, so as I must confess to your Majesty, knowing otherwise the nobleness of his nature and great parts, and vigour both of mind and body, as I had full satisfaction in him myself, so I made no doubt but the world would soon have, notwithstanding the public hatred to which he was exposed." Dorchester to Elizabeth; *S. P. Dom.*, civ. 17.

[2] Suffolk's appointment, July 14; *Patent Rolls.* 4 *Charles I.* Part 28.

CHAP. XX.

1628. July.

Almost at the same time an attempt was made to win back the friendship of the Dutch Government. The East Indiamen seized in the autumn were restored on an engagement that effectual steps should be taken to investigate the truth of the massacre of Amboyna.[1]

Restoration of the East Indiamen to the Dutch.

Was it indeed possible for Buckingham to shake off his past and to replace himself in the position from which he had started in 1624? One terrible object must have been ever before his eyes to remind him that he was not in 1624. Rochelle was suffering the horrors of starvation, and he could not act as though he had no part in the matter.

Progress of the siege of Rochelle.

June. Resistance of Rochelle

The city was by this time in great distress. Before the end of June famine was making fearful ravages. Grass and roots, with a little shell-fish, and boiled leather, formed the only food of the women and children, the weak and infirm, though men with arms in their hands were able to take advantage of their strength to extort for a time the means of subsisting on a somewhat better fare. Guiton, the champion of resistance, had held bravely out as yet. But now, for a moment, even Guiton's iron resolution gave way. He sent to ask Richelieu for terms.[2] But before the answer reached him he had changed his mind, and had resolved to resist to the uttermost. A month later the starving mass was crying out for surrender, and their voice awoke the pity of men in high office. Guiton called upon the armed populace for support, and drove the officers from the town. Yet from what quarter could assistance be hoped for? In the South of France Rohan was still in arms, but he was utterly unable to make head against the forces opposed to

July.

[1] *Contarini's Despatch*, Aug. $\frac{4}{14}$.

[2] That the offer came from Guiton, and not from Richelieu, is proved by M. Avenel. *Lettres de Richelieu*, iii. 125.

CHAP. XX.

1628. July.

him. In other quarters Richelieu's success was telling. The incapable Soissons, who the year before had been meditating an attack upon France with the aid of England and Savoy, made his peace with the Cardinal, and the Duke of La Tremoille, a leader amongst the Huguenot aristocracy, came into the camp of Rochelle to profess himself a convert to the religion which was accompanied by the sure tokens of victory. Yet it was not on victory alone that Richelieu rested, so much as on the conviction which he was able to impart that he was not engaged in a war of religion. After Rochelle was taken the French Protestants should be free as before to worship after their own fashion. But the King's authority must be supreme.

Amongst the French Protestants outside the city the resistance of Rochelle came to be regarded as a great misfortune, increasing their prospect of hard treatment from their Catholic neighbours.[1] And in Rochelle itself the same opinion was gaining ground. At last, even Guiton could not prevent the opening of negotiations with Richelieu, though he contrived to delay them till he knew that the English fleet was really coming to his aid.

Buckingham's prospects.

The enterprise in which Buckingham was now engaged was one in which success or failure would be equally ruinous. To allow the great Protestant city, which was suffering untold misery in reliance upon his plighted word, to be taken before his eyes, was to confirm the settled belief of the world in his incompetence if not in his treachery. And yet what would be the result of his success? If the arms of the national King were beaten back from the walls of Rochelle, the innocent Protestant populations scattered over France would be regarded as the traitorous allies of the foreign

[1] Substance of letters from Niort, July $\frac{4}{14}$; *S. P. France.*

enemy. It would be well if the horrors of the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, combined with the horrors of the rule of the Jacobin Committee of Public Safety, were not anticipated. Royal indignation would combine with popular bigotry to mark the Huguenots out for destruction. And all this because Buckingham and his master had failed to read the signs of the times, and had thought that it was possible for them to interfere against the national consolidation of France, because it was possible for them to interfere to prevent the merely military consolidation of Germany.

Dangers in his way.

Some perception of the dangers upon which he was running was beginning to dawn upon Buckingham. The Dutch and Venetian ambassadors had warned him from time to time that he was throwing away his chances of again interfering in Germany. If once Catholic and Protestant were exasperated to the utmost against one another in France, there would be little hope of obtaining French co-operation against the House of Austria in the Empire, even if France did not throw all its weight on the side of Spain and the Emperor. Buckingham listened to what they said without impatience, though he had no definite plan to propose. Evidently he would have been glad to be relieved from the duty of succouring Rochelle, if only he could be relieved without dishonour.

Aug. Slowness with which the fleet is fitted out.

And now came difficulties of another sort. The King went down to Southwick, a house of Sir Daniel Norton, in the neighbourhood of Portsmouth, in order to superintend the fitting out of the fleet, whilst Buckingham remained in London to hasten the supplies which were needed for the expedition. The great Duke had to learn the weakness of the omnipotence which he was accused of possessing. No man in England believed any longer in him or his under-

CHAP. XX. 1628. Aug. 6.

takings. His own officers opposed the force of inertia to his reiterated commands. "I find nothing," he was reduced to write, "of more difficulty and uncertainty than the preparations here for this service of Rochelle. Every man says he has all things ready, and yet all remains as it were at a stand. It will be Saturday night before all the victuals will be aboard, and I dare not come from hence till I see that despatched, being of such importance."[1]

On the day on which Buckingham wrote these despairing lines, Dorchester received a visit from Contarini, the Venetian ambassador, which threw a ray of light into the darkness. Contarini had been horror-struck at the idea of Buckingham's cold-blooded scheme for making Italy the battle ground between France and Spain, and he now brought with him nothing less than a project of pacification with France which had been forwarded to him by Zorzi, the representative of the Republic in France. Dorchester received Contarini with open arms, and assured him that the Duke would always prefer a peace with France to a peace with Spain, if it could be had on honourable terms. The moment the fleet was no longer needed at Rochelle it would steer to the aid of the King of Denmark.

Contarini proposes peace with France.

Contarini then had an interview with Buckingham himself. The only difficulty in the way seemed to be that the King of France would make it a point of honour not to treat with a foreign sovereign on the condition of his own subjects. It was at last agreed to propose that the Rochellese should treat directly with Lewis. Nothing, said Buckingham, would satisfy him better than to find when he arrived at Rochelle that the citizens had received satisfaction from their own King. Zorzi should be entrusted with the negotiation,

His interview with Buckingham.

Buckingham welcomes the idea of peace.

[1] *Buckingham to Conway, Aug. 6; S. P. Dom., cxii. 32.*

and if there was not time to settle everything before the Duke sailed, the good news might meet him when he arrived on the coast of France. Care, however, must be taken not to effect peace between Lewis and the Huguenots without making peace between France and England at the same time. When everything was arranged there might be an interview between Buckingham and Richelieu to conclude peace under the walls of Rochelle.[1]

Preparations for war in Germany.

Once more the sanguine Buckingham was looking forward to carry out his old scheme of a Protestant war. Morgan was ordered to gather together the remains of the garrison of Stade, and to carry them back to the aid of the King of Denmark. Dulbier had letters of credit given him, with orders to keep his men on foot till the end of October.[2]

Aug. 15. Buckingham says the King wishes delay.

Buckingham's authority was great in England. But it was not everything. It was necessary for him to go down to Portsmouth to consult the King. On the 15th he was back in London, and told Contarini that Charles was in no hurry. He was afraid that if the negotiations began before the fleet arrived, the Rochellese would be disheartened and the French inspirited to make exorbitant demands.

Aug. 17. Buckingham at Portsmouth.

On the 17th Buckingham was again at Portsmouth. Soubise, backed by two of the deputies from Rochelle, spoke vehemently against peace. Buckingham himself

[1] *Contarini's Despatch*, with enclosures, Aug. $\frac{10}{20}$; Carleton to Wake, Sept. 2; *Court and Times*, i. 391. *Carleton Letters*, xxi. Mr. Forster sees treachery in all this; I see none. There was no intention to withdraw from fighting unless the negotiation was satisfactory. The facts must be taken in connection with Clarendon's statement that the Duke, shortly before his death, thought of turning against Weston. If Cottington, as is most likely, was Clarendon's informant, the story doubtless originated with Weston, and may be taken as Weston's interpretation of the probable result of Buckingham's change of policy.

[2] *Ibid.*, Aug. $\frac{12}{22}$.

CHAP. XX. 1628.

was to some extent shaken. He told Contarini, who had followed him, that it was impossible to trust Richelieu, who might communicate the whole negotiation to Spain if time were allowed him. But Contarini was perfectly satisfied that Buckingham wished for peace, and was not making difficulties in order to create delay. He left him on the understanding that they were to meet the next morning in the King's presence at Southwick, to come to a final decision on the matter.[1]

Aug 22. Contarini's last interview with the Duke.

That interview was never to take place. Before the hour for the meeting arrived the great Duke had been struck down by the knife of a fanatic.

The members of Buckingham's family had long been prepared for coming evil. Strange fancies, the offspring of despondency, lay, doubtless, at the root of the wild stories which have floated into the history of the time. Clarendon himself gravely told how the ghost of Sir George Villiers appeared to an ancient servitor, commanding him to warn his son to propitiate the nation which he had offended; and Buckingham's sister, the Countess of Denbigh, writing to him on the fatal 23rd of August, 'bedewed the paper with her tears,' and fainted away as she thought of the dangers of his voyage. Even Buckingham himself, fearless as he was, was haunted by a feeling of insecurity. In taking leave of Laud he begged him to put his Majesty in mind of his poor wife and children. "Some adventure," he explained, "may kill me as well as another man."[2]

[1] *Contarini's Despatch*, $\frac{\text{Aug. } 23}{\text{Sept. } 2}$. It does not appear from these letters what terms Contarini proposed; but we know from another source that he meant to suggest that the King of France should raise the siege of Rochelle and grant religious liberty to the Protestants, on condition that the King of England should renounce all pretensions to interfere between Lewis and his subjects. Contarini to Dorchester, $\frac{\text{Aug. } 27}{\text{Sept. } 6}$; *S. P. France.*

[2] *Rel. Wottonianæ*, i. 335.

Yet he was not prepared for assassination. Some weeks before, Sir Clement Throckmorton had begged him to wear a shirt of mail beneath his clothes. "A shirt of mail," answered the Duke, "would be but a silly defence against any popular fury. As for a single man's assault, I take myself to be in no danger. There are no Roman spirits left."[1] On the 22nd he had nearly fallen a victim to that popular fury which alone he dreaded. A sailor who had affronted the Duke a fortnight before was condemned to death by a court-martial. As he was led to execution, an attempt was made to rescue him by force, and the guard was attacked by an angry mob of his comrades. Buckingham with a mounted train rode hastily to the defence. The assailants were driven on board ship. Two of them were killed in the struggle, and many more were wounded by the armed horsemen. Buckingham then accompanied the procession to the gibbet. But for the mutiny the poor man's life would have been spared, as the Duchess had begged his life. But the pardon could no longer be granted if discipline was to be maintained.[2] Even after this vindication of his authority, Buckingham had many a danger to guard against. The officers formed a circle round him to carry him in safety to the house in which he was lodging, a house in the High Street in the occupation of Captain Mason, the treasurer of the army.

Aug. 22. Mutiny at Portsmouth.

That night Buckingham was restless in his sleep, as he well might be. The Duchess, anxious as ever, adjured him in the morning to take more precautions. At first he spoke harshly to her. Then, softened by her manifest affection, he told her that he would take her importu-

Aug. 23. Rumour of the relief of Rochelle

[1] *Rel. Wottonianæ*, i. 233. D'Ewes, *Autobiography*, 381.

[2] A letter from one of the Highams. *Rous's Diary.*

CHAP. XX.

1628. Aug. 23.

nity as a sign of her love.[1] About nine o'clock he came down to breakfast in a room communicating by a dark passage with the central hall. As he breakfasted news was brought that Rochelle had been relieved. Such news, if it had been true, would have set him free at once from the burthen which he had found too heavy to bear. A peace with France, a triumphant peace, would have speedily followed, and the fleet would have steered for the mouth of the Elbe, where Glückstadt still held bravely out for the King of Denmark and the Protestant cause. But alluring as the prospect was, it was all the more necessary for him to be on his guard against false rumours. Soubise and the deputies of Rochelle protested warmly that the tale could not be true, and their vehement gesticulations gave rise, with those who were alike ignorant of the French language and the French temperament, to the supposition that their eagerness to bear down contradiction was passing into angry menace.

The breakfast party was soon at an end. Dorchester had come in from Southwick to fetch the Duke to the conference with Contarini which was to settle the terms on which Charles would be ready to agree to peace when the fleet arrived at Rochelle. Buckingham rose to follow him. As he stepped into the crowded hall he stopped for an instant to speak to one of his colonels, Sir Thomas Fryer. Fryer was a short man, and the Duke stooped to listen to him. As his attention was thus engaged, a man who had been standing at the entrance of the passage into the breakfast room stepped forward, and struck him heavily with a knife in the left breast, saying, "God have mercy upon thy soul!"[2] as he dealt the blow. Buckingham

Murder of the Duke.

[1] Johnston's *Hist. Rerum Britannicarum*, 722.
[2] *Clarendon*, i. 55.

had strength enough to draw the knife out of the wound, and crying 'Villain!' attempted to follow the assassin. But the blow had been struck by no feeble arm. Tottering on for a step or two, the Duke fell heavily against a table and sank dead upon the ground.[1]

The murderer seized.

All was confusion for a moment; the immediate bystanders thought that Buckingham had been seized with a stroke of apoplexy. But the blood gushing from his mouth and from the wound soon undeceived them. The murderer had slipped away into the kitchen, and men who had witnessed the quick words and flashing eyes of Soubise in the breakfast room, fancied that they had found there the explanation of the mystery. Shouts of "A Frenchman! a Frenchman!" were mingled with "Where is the villain? Where is the butcher?" In the excitement of the moment, the assassin fancied that his own name, Felton, was pronounced. He was no coward, and, stepping calmly into the hall with his sword in his hand, he confronted the crowd with the simple words, "I am the man. Here I am." But for the intervention of Dorchester and a few others, he would have been cut down on the spot. It was only with difficulty that he was rescued and carried off for examination.

The Duchess of Buckingham in the gallery.

Then followed a scene the like of which had never been witnessed by any present. Lady Anglesea, the Duke's sister-in-law, was watching the crowd in the hall from a gallery into which the sleeping apartments opened. Flinging open the door of the chamber in which the Duchess was, she told her that the sad day which her loving heart had so long foreboded had come at last. Rushing out in her night-dress with a bitter cry, the poor lady, now a widow, looked down upon the bleed-

[1] Mead to Stuteville, Sept. 20; *Ellis*, ser. 1, iii. 261.

CHAP. XX. 1628.

ing, lifeless corpse of him who had been her only joy. "Ah, poor ladies!" wrote one who was present; "such was their screechings, tears, and distractions, that I never in my life heard the like before, and hope never to hear the like again."[1]

In a few minutes the body was taken up and removed to the room in which the Duke had breakfasted. But there was no man there who thought it his duty to watch by the corpse of him who had been the greatest man in England. The throng, amongst which were so many who had received everything at his hand, poured forth to spread the news or to provide for the dangers of the hour. The mortal remains of him who had stood apart in life from his fellow-men, were left for the moment untended by any friendly hand.[2]

The King informed.

In the meanwhile the news was on the way to Southwick. The messenger who bore the tidings found the King at morning prayers, and whispered the tale of horror in his ear. If the workings of his countenance betrayed the emotion within, he did not rise or leave the room till the service was at an end. Then going into his own apartment he threw himself upon his bed, and with bitter tears and lamentations gave free vent to his sorrow.[3]

Charles might well grieve for the loss of the only real personal friend he ever had. But with personal sorrow was doubtless mingled another feeling. "His Majesty," says a contemporary letter-writer, "since his death, hath been used to call him his martyr, and to

[1] Dorchester to Elizabeth; *Ellis*, ser. 1, iii. 256; Aug. 27; *S. P. Dom.*, cxiv. 20.

[2] *Rel. Wottoniance*, i. 234.

[3] *Clarendon*, i. 62. Contarini distinctly speaks of the King as showing trouble in his countenance, and it is likely enough that the contrary story, which has been usually accepted, was an exaggeration based upon the fact that the King did not leave his place.

say the world was much mistaken in him. For whereas it was commonly thought he ruled his Majesty, it was clear otherwise, having been his Majesty's most faithful and obedient subject in all things; as his Majesty would make hereafter sensibly appear to the world."[1] In all this there was doubtless much exaggeration. Charles was the last person to discover how much he had been influenced. But there was also more truth in it than history has been willing to acknowledge. The secrets of the intercourse between the two men will, in all probability, never be revealed. But there is every reason to believe that Charles's tenacity and self-sufficiency had to the full as large a share in the mischief as the presumptuous optimism of his favourite.

Story of Felton.

It was for Charles a melancholy duty to discover the motives of the assassin. John Felton, a gentleman springing from an old Suffolk family, had served as a lieutenant in the expedition to Rhé. The captain of his regiment had been killed and he had expected promotion. But promotion, on account of some rule of the service, was refused him; and when he applied a second time, the Duke, to whom he had appealed, asking how he was to live, had, according to one account, told him that he might hang himself if he could not live.[2] Returning to England, he remained in London, a moody, discontented man, whiling away his time by much reading. At last he could bear his misery no longer. Besides his own special grievance, he was weighed down by the common misfortune of all who entered the King's service. His pay amounted to some seventy or eighty pounds, and not a penny of it was forthcoming.

[1] Mead to Stuteville, Sept. 20; *Court and Times*, i. 395.

[2] This is but a way of reconciling Wotton's statement that he was satisfied with the story of his receiving this answer from the Duke. He said he was twice rejected, so both accounts may be true.

CHAP. XX. 1628. Aug.

At the beginning of August he was deeply in debt, and he saw no means of sustaining life much longer. His reading brought to him the persuasion that the man who had cut short his own career was a public enemy. The Remonstrance of the Commons taught him that the Duke was the cause of all the grievances of the kingdom. A book written by Dr. Eglesham, a physician of James I., in which Buckingham was accused of poisoning the late King and the Marquis of Hamilton as well, painted his oppressor in still darker colours.[1] Certain propositions culled out of a book called the 'Golden Epistles,' which taught him that all things done for the good, profit, and benefit of the commonwealth should be accounted lawful, confirmed him in the resolution to rid the country of its tyrant.[2]

On the 19th his resolution was finally taken. He himself always ascribed his determination to the reading of the Remonstrance. One who saw him in his disconsolate condition not long before, had told him that it was not fit for a soldier to want courage. "If I be angered or moved," replied Felton, "they shall find I have courage enough." It was quite true. At a cutler's shop on Tower Hill he bought a tenpenny knife, and, as his left hand was maimed, he sewed a sheath for it into his pocket that he might draw it easily with one hand. As he passed through Fleet Street he went into a church and left his name to be prayed for as 'a man much discontented in mind.' So he passed on to Portsmouth, making his way on foot, with what help he could get to ride some portion of the way. On the morning of the 23rd he was at Mason's house, ready for his victim.

[1] *Rel. Wottoniance*, i. 232.

[2] Inclosure (Sept. 19) in Mead's letter to Stuteville; *Court and Times*, i. 399. *Duppa's Report*, Sept. 11; *S. P. Dom.*, cxvi. 101.

CHAP. XX.

1628. Aug.

Felton's only care was to assure the world that he was an executioner, not an assassin. In the crown of his hat he had sewn a paper on which he had written, to persuade others as he had persuaded himself, that.

The writing in the crown of his hat.

Nought he did in hate, but all in honour.

"If I be slain, let no man condemn me, but rather condemn himself. It is for our sins that our hearts are hardened and become senseless, or else he had not gone so long unpunished.

"JOHN FELTON."

Then again, as if he had just risen from the perusal of those propositions from the 'Golden Epistles,' of which he kept a copy in his trunk:

"He is unworthy of the name of a gentleman or soldier, in my opinion, that is afraid to sacrifice his life for the honour of God, his King, and country.

"JOHN FELTON." [1]

His popularity.

If Felton stood alone in conceiving his murderous purpose, he did not stand alone in regarding it with complacency after it was accomplished. The popular feeling about Buckingham was something like that with which the despot of an old Greek city was regarded. He had placed himself above his King, his country, and the laws of his country, and he had no right to the sympathy of honest men. When the news was known in London, men went about with smiling faces, and healths were drunk to Felton on every side.[2]

Sept. 12.

"God bless thee, little David!" cried an old woman to the slayer of the Goliath of her time, as he passed through Kingston on his way to the Tower. Outside the Tower itself a dense throng was gathered to see him, and friendly greetings of "The Lord comfort

[1] Dorchester to Elizabeth; *Ellis*, ser. 1, iii. 256.

[2] Nethersole to Carlisle, Aug. 24; *S. P. Dom.*, cxiv. 7.

CHAP. XX. 1628. Sept.

thee! The Lord be merciful unto thee!" were the last sounds which rang in his ears as the gates closed upon him.[1] Nor was the feeling of exultation confined to the illiterate and uneducated. Even Nethersole, courtier as he was, spoke of the murder as the removal of the stone of offence by the hand of God, and as a means by which the King might be brought to perfect unity with his people.[2] Verses expressive of satisfaction were passed in manuscript from hand to hand. One of these copies was believed, even in such a well-informed company as that which met at Sir Robert Cotton's at Westminster, to have been the work of Ben Jonson himself, who, as poet laureate, was officially bound to abstain from sympathy with the national rejoicing. The charge was thought sufficiently serious to demand enquiry by the Attorney-General, and the verses were finally traced to a minister, Zouch Townley, a devoted admirer of the poet, who had caught the ring of Jonson's versification. Townley avoided punishment by a prudent flight to Holland, but his words remain as a startling memorial of what a student of Christchurch and a minister of the gospel could write under the impressions caused by Buckingham's rule. The poem is a long exhortation to Felton to enjoy his bondage and to bear with courage the tortures preparing for him. Townley ended with words of encouragement which doubtless met with a hearty reception from their readers:—

Townley's verses.

> "Farewell! for thy brave sake we shall not send
> Henceforth commanders enemies to defend;
> Nor would it our just monarchs please
> To keep an admiral to lose the seas.
> Farewell! Undaunted stand, and joy to be
> Of public sorrow the epitome.

[1] Mead to Stuteville, Sept. 13, 20; *Court and Times*, i. 394, 395.
[2] Nethersole to Carlisle, Aug. 24; *S. P. Dom.*, cxiv. 7.

Let the Duke's name solace and crown thy thrall,
All we for him did suffer—thou for all;
And I dare boldly write, as thou darest die,
Stout Felton, England's ransom he doth lie." [1]

When assassination was thus lauded, it is no wonder that those few to whom Buckingham was not a monster regarded with horror the deed which threatened to refer political disputes to the bitter arbitration of the dagger. To Charles and Laud it was no warning opening their eyes to the risk of conducting a government in defiance of opinion; it was simply the opening of the floodgates of iniquity, which they were in duty bound to keep closed at all hazard to themselves. Such a feeling as this could alone account for a strange passage in the life of William Chillingworth, the divine whom all men now combine to honour. He was at this time at Oxford, a Fellow of Trinity, and to his argumentative mind, with its eagerness to try every conclusion by its own logical tests and its dislike of foregone conclusions, the Puritan dogmatism was extremely hateful, especially when it was found in conjunction with a noisy, irreverent temper. Amongst the members of the College was a certain Alexander Gill, assistant to his father the head master of St. Paul's School, a man of some abilities, who had contrived to impress at least one of his pupils, John Milton, with the idea of the splendour of his talents. But he was much given to bluster and wild talk of every kind, and one day in the end of August he came down to Oxford full of delight at the Duke's murder. "The King," he said, "is fitter to stand in a Cheapside shop with an apron before him, and say 'What lack ye?' than to govern a kingdom." Then he proposed Felton's health, and talked rashly about the Duke and the late

Gill at Oxford.

[1] Preface to Bruce's *Calendar*, 1628–9, viii. *Court and Times*, i. 427.

CHAP. XX.

1628. Aug.

King being in hell together. All this Chillingworth, in disgust at the ribaldry, related to Laud. Gill was brought into the Star Chamber, and only escaped the full infliction of a terrible sentence by Laud's intercession on the ground of his father's position and services.[1]

Sept. 11. Buckingham's funeral

The day before Felton was brought to the Tower, the Duke's funeral was hurried over 'in as poor and confused manner as hath been seen.' At ten o'clock at night a coffin was brought to Westminster Abbey, attended by only about a hundred mourners. Yet even this, if the story told can be believed, was mere show. The day before the body had been privately interred in the Abbey, lest the people in their madness should rise to offer insult to the remains of the man whom they hated. Even the sham funeral of the following day was attended with marks of extraordinary precaution. "To prevent all disorders," we are told, "the trainbands kept a guard on both sides of the way all along from Wallingford House to Westminster Church, beating up their drums loud, and carrying their pikes and muskets upon their shoulders as in a march, not trailing them at their heels, as is usual in mourning."

Sept. 10. His burial.

The dishonour shown to the remains of the Duke ceased at the Abbey doors. His place had already been marked out by the excessive favour of his sovereign. In the Chapel of Henry VII., set apart in older days for members of the Royal House, Buckingham had received permission to take possession of a vault for his own family. It had already been twice opened. There lay his eldest son, a child who had died in infancy. There lay his sister's son, young Philip Fielding. And now the vault was open for the third time to receive the mortal remains of him who whilst living

[1] The facts are collected from Mead's letters and the State Papers in Masson's *Life of Milton*, i. 177.

had stood amongst kings, and who was not to be divided from them in his death. CHAP. XX.

1634. Sept 11. Buckingham's monument.

Charles at first spoke of erecting a stately monument to the memory of him whom he had loved so well. But Charles had no money to spare, and Weston, it is said, warned him that all Europe would cry out against him if a costly memorial arose over Buckingham whilst the tomb of his father, James, was still unhonoured. At last, the widow to whom he had ever been the most loved of husbands, in spite of his many infidelities, stepped in and built that pretentious tomb in which the bad taste of an age in which grace and beauty were forgotten was signally manifested. Yet with an unconscious irony the piled marble points the moral of the story of him who sleeps below. Unlike the figure of the Duke of Lennox on the opposite side of the chapel, the form of Buckingham lies open to the eye of day without the superincumbent shadow of a canopy to shroud him from the crowd whose observation in life he loved to court. The report of his actions is committed not to some 'star-pointing pyramid' firmly and immoveably based upon the firm earth, but to a sprightly Fame, who, with bursting cheeks, proclaims with a trumpet the great deeds of the Duke. On either side of her are two slender obelisks, which would evidently succumb to the first gust of wind that blew, and which rest upon a foundation of skulls. "Dust thou art, and to dust thou shalt return," is the sentence written upon the works of him who has built his house upon the sand. The one touch of human interest in the tomb, is the attendance of the children, who had been taught by their loving mother to reverence their father's name. The Duchess, in truth, had no doubt of her lost husband's perfections. In the inscription which she caused to be affixed to the

CHAP. XX.

1628. Sept.

monument, she spoke with sweet remembrance of his gifts of mind and body, of his liberality, and above all of his singular humanity and incomparable gentleness of disposition. To her, at least, he was still the enigma of the world, who had been styled at one time the parent, at another time the enemy, of his country. She, at least, herself cherishing in her heart a warm attachment for the ancient forms of religion, could speak with wonderment, if not perhaps with half-concealed sarcasm, of the strange fate which caused him to be charged with attachment to the Papacy whilst he was making war against Papists, and to be slain by a Protestant whilst he was doing what he could to give assistance to Protestants.[1]

Career of Buckingham.

The solution of the enigma is not to be found in the popular imagination of the day, and still less in the popular history which has been founded upon it. Buckingham owed his rise to his good looks, to his merry laugh, and winning manners. But to compare him with Gaveston is as unfair as it would be to compare Charles with Edward II. As soon as his power was established, he aimed at being the director of the destinies of the State. Champion in turn of a war in the Palatinate, of a Spanish alliance, and of a breach first with Spain and then with France, he nourished a fixed desire to lead his country in the path in which for the time being he thought that she ought to walk. His abilities were above the average, and they were supported by that kind of patriotism which clings to a successful man when his objects are, in his own eyes, inseparable from the objects of his country. But if it is only just to class him amongst ministers rather than amongst favourites, he must rank amongst the most incapable ministers of this

[1] Keepe, *Monumenta Westmonasteriensia*, 283; compare Stanley's *Memorials of Westminster Abbey*, 236.

or of any other country. He had risen too fast in early life to make him conscious of difficulty in anything which he wished to do. He knew nothing of the need of living laborious days which is incumbent on those who hope to achieve permanent success. He thought that eminence in peace and war could be carried by storm. And as one failure after another dashed to the ground his hopes, he could not see that he and his mode of action were the main causes of the mischief. Ever ready to engage in some stupendous undertaking or another of which he had never measured the difficulties, he could not understand that to the world at large such conduct must seem entirely incomprehensible, and that when men saw his own fortunes prospering in the midst of national ruin and disgrace, they would come to the mistaken but natural conclusion that he cared everything for his own fortunes and nothing for the national disgrace.

Buckingham's ignorance of the real basis of the popular indignation was fully shared by the King. The explanations of Felton, natural as they were, were received with deep incredulity by Charles. He could not but believe that Felton was the instrument of a widespread conspiracy. Dorset, who was one of the councillors employed to examine the prisoner, threatened him with the rack. Felton replied that if he were put on the rack he would accuse Dorset himself of being his accomplice.[1] Still the wish to wring the supposed truth out of the murderer was strong with Charles. On November 13 he ordered that the Judges should be consulted whether Felton could be tortured by law, as he was not inclined to use his prerogative as it had been so often used in former reigns. To this question the Judges unanimously returned an answer

Felton threatened with the rack.

Nov. 13. The Judges consulted.

Nov. 14.

[1] — to Stuteville, Sept. 19; *Court and Times*, i. 399.

CHAP. XX.

1628.

in the negative.[1] On the 27th, therefore, Felton was at last brought up for trial. He pleaded guilty. Some compunction he showed for his deed, though the repentance was probably not very deep. He asked that the hand which had been the instrument of the crime might be cut off before he suffered. Of course this request was refused, as contrary to the law.[2] On the 29th he was hanged at Tyburn. The body was then carried down to Portsmouth, to be suspended in chains in the sight of those amongst whom his crime had been committed.

Nov. 27. Felton condemned and executed.

When great men die, or are driven from office, their works survive them. The testament of Richelieu was written in the triumphant story of victory which decorated the annals of his weaker successor. The legacy of Buckingham to his country was failure and disgrace. All through August the misery of Rochelle was growing blacker. The inhabitants were dying by hundreds. Rats and other unclean animals were no longer to be met with. Leather and parchment boiled up with a little sugar were regarded as delicacies. Entire families perished together. Even the soldiers, for whom the scanty supplies in the town had been husbanded to the uttermost, were dying of sheer starvation. Voices were everywhere raised for sur-

Misery at Rochelle.

[1] Mr. Jardine, in his *Reading on the use of Torture*, has reduced this matter to its true dimensions. Torture had been allowed by custom as inflicted by the prerogative, but not by law. The Judges only said what Charles ought to have known already. Torture was inflicted as late as 1640 by prerogative. I do not agree with Mr. Jardine in throwing discredit on Rushworth's narrative, or in connecting the enquiry which was made on Nov. 13 with the affair about the hand which took place on the 27th. The position Charles was in after the grant of the Petition of Right would make him shy of using his prerogative unless he felt himself to be unquestionably justified in doing so.

[2] Whitelocke's story that Charles wished the hand to be cut off is no doubt a mere substitution of Charles for Felton.

render, and it was with difficulty that Guiton was able to induce his fellow citizens to hold out at least till the English fleet appeared.[1]

Sept. 7. Sailing of the fleet.

Charles had thrown himself eagerly into the preparations for succouring the beleaguered town, and on September 7 the fleet weighed anchor. Buckingham's place as Admiral was filled by the Earl of Lindsey, who, as Lord Willoughby, had commanded the futile expedition which had been driven back by a gale in the Bay of Biscay in the summer of 1626.[2]

Sept. 18. Anchors off St. Martin's.

On the 18th Lindsey anchored off St. Martin's, the scene of Buckingham's failure of the year before. Baffling calms and contrary winds prevented an immediate attack, and it was not till the 23rd that any attempt was made to succour the starving city. The difficulties were almost if not entirely insuperable. Up the narrow channel which led to the port lay the two moles advancing from either side, the space left between them to admit of the scour of the tide being covered by a palisade. In front of the moles were thirty or forty vessels, which in themselves would have been unable to oppose a persistent resistance to the far more numerous English force. But the harbour swarmed with boats and small craft laden with armed soldiers, and artillery was posted on each point of vantage at the entrance of the harbour, so that an advancing squadron could only reach the enemy under a cross fire of cannon and musketry from either side, as well as under the fire of the guns upon the moles.

Sept. 23. Prospects of the attack.

Want of enthusiasm in the fleet.

Lindsey, unhappily for his chances, had other risks to encounter besides those which awaited him from the enemy. His crews were no more ready to follow him

[1] Pory to Mead, Nov. 28; *ibid.*, i. 437. Arçere, *Hist. de la Rochelle*, ii. 306.

[2] Dorchester to Carlisle, Aug. 30; Mead to Stuteville, Sept. 23; *Court and Times*, i. 388, 398.

CHAP. XX. 1628.

into danger than they had been to follow Denbigh in the spring. The system which had ruined the Cadiz expedition was still at full work. Now, as then, men had been brought together by compulsion, and those in authority had fancied that human valour and enthusiasm could be had to order, like so much wood and iron. When the word was given to attack, the masters of the merchantmen which had been pressed into the service complained that they were being exposed to danger by being ordered to the front, where they might possibly be deserted by the King's ships, which had been directed to follow in support. But the King's ships drew too much water to come to close quarters, and the Admiral could only order them to go as near the danger as they could without running aground. It was to no purpose. The merchantmen remained at such a distance that after firing for two hours the whole fleet lost but six men. No attempt was made to board the enemy, though Lindsey believed the operation to be perfectly feasible.

Ineffectual attack.

Sept. 24. Second attack fails.

The next day's attack was equally ineffectual. In vain orders were issued to the commanders to carry their vessels nearer to the danger and to send in fire-ships to grapple with the enemy. Five or six fire-ships were sent drifting in, without any attempt to direct their course, and the Frenchmen in the boats easily towed them aside and ran them ashore where they could do no harm. Not one ship of the French fleet was set on fire. Not one Englishman was slain in the attempt.

In spite of these pitiable results Lindsey could not make up his mind to relinquish his hopes. In a few days the spring tide would enable him to bring his largest ships nearer to the mole. But time pressed. A messenger from the town succeeded in reaching the

Sept. 26. News from the town.

English fleet with a tale of desperate misery, whilst the deputies who had accompanied the fleet from England talked of placing the town in the hands of the King of England, as if he had any chance of taking possession of it in any other than a figurative way.[1]

Oct. 5. Montague's negotiation.

Walter Montague had accompanied the fleet in order to carry out the negotiations which had occupied Buckingham on the eve of his assassination. Hitherto there had been no use made of his services. But as the prospect of relieving Rochelle was becoming dubious, Lindsey resolved to send him to the Cardinal on pretence of effecting a change of prisoners, to see what the French might have to say. Montague had no reason to complain of his reception. Richelieu received him with all courtesy, showed him over the moles, and convinced him that the works were impregnable by any force which Lindsey could bring against them.[2] Naturally Richelieu refused to quit his hold upon Rochelle. The city, he said, must surrender to its own sovereign. It was not to Charles's interest to support rebellion. But he could assure him that there should be no persecution. As soon as the King returned to Paris after the town had yielded, he would issue a declaration confirming to the Huguenots freedom of worship in the places in which they had formerly enjoyed it. The prizes taken at sea, with the exception of the ship unfairly seized in the neutral waters of the Texel,[3] might be kept by the captors. The Queen's household might be regulated on the scheme negotiated by Bassompierre. The moment that these terms were accepted Lewis would turn his arms against Spain in Italy, and would come to an understanding with

Oct. 7. Richelieu's terms.

[1] Lindsey to the King, Oct. 3; *S. P. Dom.*, cxiii. 7. Soubise to the King, Oct. 2; *S. P. France.*

[2] — to the Count of Morette, Oct. $\frac{8}{18}$; *S. P. France.*

[3] P. 150.

CHAP. XX.

1628.

England and its allies on the best mode of assisting the King of Denmark.[1]

Oct. 14. Montague in England.

With these terms Montague was despatched to England, with instructions to inform the King that the fleet was in need of victuals and munitions. On October 14 he appeared before Charles. His message ought to have carried conviction that the relief of Rochelle was hopeless, and that it was absurd to expect better terms than those which were now offered him.

Charles rejects the terms.

But Charles, who was never able to persuade himself that facts were other than he wished them to be, would have nothing to say to Richelieu's offers. Montague was to take back the answer that "his Majesty cannot admit to hearken to any accommodation wherein his Majesty shall leave those of the Religion in worse condition than he found them when he was invited by the King of France to treat for them, and his ambassadors were received to stand as pledges for the performance of the conditions. If, therefore, his brother the King of France will show his affection to the common good of Christendom by taking away the cause of the difference, and put those of the Religion into their promised liberties, and dis-siege Rochelle, his Majesty will not only re-enter into a strong league and friendship with his dear brother, but will endeavour to draw not only the Duke of Savoy but all his other friends and allies into a resolution for the re-establishing of the affairs of Italy and Germany, and to enter into it with united counsel and forces as to the defence of the common cause. And therein, in respect of the near correspondence that is between them, his Majesty doubts not to prevail with them."[2]

[1] Propositions sent by Montague, Oct. 7 [?]; Lindsey to the King, Oct. 7; *S. P. Dom.*, cxviii. 27.

[2] The King's answer, Oct. 14 [?]; *S. P. Dom.*, cxviii. 68.

Evidently his Majesty was fitted to control the affairs of some other than this world of ours, where men have to submit to superior force, if they will not yield to superior reason. More ridiculous demand was never made than this, that after all that had passed Lewis should raise the siege of a city which would in a few days be in his hands.

Orders Lindsey to persevere.

Charles's letter to Lindsey did not echo the despondent tone of the Admiral's despatches. "We will give you no other charge or advice," he wrote, "than that you take care of our honour, the honour of our nation, and your own honour, according to the rules of wisdom and reason and the ancient practice of former generals. We see that the passage must be opened before the town can be relieved. And we conceive the French ships must be beaten before the passage can be opened, which we think can best be done while they are on float, but cannot be done without hazard of some of our ships, and loss of our subjects whom we much more tender. But our honour and our pious intention to relieve those distressed churches give way to such actions as may clear our affections and intentions in that point. And therefore we do call for it at your hands, that, according to your wisdom and noble disposition, upon which we rely, you make a vigorous trial for beating of their ships, and that being done, and when you shall have applied your engines of war and your courage and industry to force the passage for the relief of the town—to which we pray God give success—if it prove unfeasible, we shall hold ourself to be excused to the world, and that you have worthily acquitted yourself to us. We will only add this word, that whereas the French[1] have often made the work feasible to us, and offered to lead

[1] *i.e.*, the refugees from Rochelle.

CHAP. XX. 1628.

on our men, and instruct their courages by example, we would have you let them know that we expect at their hands that they do now by some notable action make good their former boastings, howsoever we do rely upon the courage of our own subjects, which we hope will never deceive us, and particularly in this occasion of the relief of Rochelle."[1]

It was not a very useful letter to address to a commander whose chief difficulty was that he could not persuade three quarters of his force to go into action. Its effect was never to be tried. The Rochellese had discovered for themselves the futility of Charles's efforts to save them. On October 18 the capitulation was signed which put an end to their long and heroic resistance.

Oct. 18. Surrender of Rochelle.

Treatment of the city.

Externally Rochelle was treated like a conquered city. The massive walls which had bid defiance to so many armies were destroyed. The privileges of the town were cancelled, and the King's officers governed the Protestant municipal republic as they governed in Paris or in Rouen. But Richelieu had set his heart on showing to the world an example of toleration, and his influence with Lewis was great enough to enable him to have his way. He, at least, was no dreamer, and he knew that if France was to be strong against its enemies without, it must be at peace at home. Those who expected that the victory of a Cardinal would be the signal for outrages upon the Huguenots found that they were grievously mistaken. Wherever the French Protestants had enjoyed liberty of worship before, they were to enjoy it now. Protestant and Catholic would be equally welcome to aid their common country with their services, but there was to be no more political independence, no more defiance of the sovereign

Oct. 18.

[1] The King to Lindsey, Oct. 14; *S. P. Dom.*, cxviii. 66.

who represented, in the eyes of all men, the unity of France.

The fall of Rochelle was a bitter draught for Charles. Lewis, who had rejected his mediation and frustrated his efforts, was strong, and he was weak. Yet the military and naval failure was by no means the measure of his disaster. The French king's declaration of tolerance was an announcement to the world that the war which Charles and Buckingham had waged so persistently had been a mere blunder from beginning to end. All that Charles could reasonably ask for was given to the Huguenots without his intervention. There need have been no forced loan, no arbitrary imprisonments, no expedition to Rhé, no attempt to goad unwilling mariners to break through the guarded barrier at Rochelle. Charles's fancy that Richelieu was a mere emissary of the Roman See was shown beyond question to have been an entire delusion. He had proved himself as incompetent to recognise the conditions under which war ought to be waged as Buckingham had proved himself incompetent to carry it to a satisfactory conclusion.

Charles's failure.

The period of history which began with the meeting of the Parliament of 1624 was at an end. The war fever had died down upon its embers. Men had come to learn that Spain was not so very terrible after all, now that she had failed to take advantage of opportunities such as had never before been offered to an enemy of England. A few months might pass before peace might be actually signed with France and Spain, but sooner or later peace was inevitable. Charles had no longer the means of carrying on war. But would he be able to lead the nation in time of peace? The man was dead who had concentrated upon his own person the general hatred, and it might seem as if

Oct. 22. End of the war period.

CHAP. XX. 1628.

Charles would start fair upon a new course. But such an expectation, if it really existed, was founded on a delusion. In all the mischief of the past years Charles had had his share, and the qualities which had combined with Buckingham's presumption to bring about the ruin were not likely to assist him when he undertook to calm the excitement and discontent of an alienated people. James had been regarded with disfavour because, with all his knowledge and shrewdness, he had no resolute energy to give effect to his determinations. Charles had forfeited his popularity because he refused to look facts in the face or to acknowledge that opinions other than his own had either a right to exist or strength to compel their recognition. When the war was at an end questions about internal government and legislation, questions especially about Church doctrine and discipline, would be certain to come into the foreground; and there was unfortunately no chance that the man who had dealt so unwisely with the opposition of the French king to the wishes which he had conceived, would deal more wisely with the opposition of his own subjects to the principles which he believed to be true. The years of unwise negotiation in James's reign led up to the war and desolation which followed. The years of unwise war in the reign of Charles were leading up to divisions and distractions at home, to civil strife, and to the dethronement and execution of the sovereign who had already given such proofs of his incapacity to understand the feelings of those whom he was appointed to govern.

INDEX.

ABBEVILLE, Buckingham at, i. 182
Abbot, George, Archbishop of Canterbury, presents an address from the Houses to the King, i. 27; receives Mansfeld, 57; is requested by the Commons to examine the complaints against Montague, 208; gives an account of the steps which he had taken, 209; probably in communication with the leaders of the Commons, 282; is let alone by Charles, 334; asks the Commons to support the Government, ii. 12; is directed to write to demand a forced loan, 98; refuses to license Sibthorpe's sermon, 173; sent to Ford, and stripped of his jurisdiction, 174; takes his place in the House of Lords, 202; advocates the opinion that the King may not commit without showing cause, 233; hinders the rejection of the Commons' resolution, 234; speaks on the Commons' rejection of the Lords' additional clause to the Petition of Right, 259; proposes a conference with the Commons, 265; advises the adoption of the Petition, 267
Admiralty, Court of, proceedings in, against the East India Company, i. 73; proceedings in, about the French prizes, 346, 347; order in, for the restitution of the 'St. Peter,' 351
Alford, Edward, moves for a Committee to consider the course of business, i. 194; declares that the King's servants are responsible, 260; declares that the Commons are not engaged for the recovery of the Palatinate, 274; made sheriff to exclude him from Parliament, 337; is dismissed from the justiceship of the peace, ii. 78; asks the lawyers what will be the advantage of a mere confirmation of the statutes, 249; objects to the Lords' addition to the Petition of Right, 257
Alleyne, Captain, is left by Trevor to watch the French ships in Holland, ii. 150
Amboyna, massacre of, i. 77; orders given for reprisals for, 118; the Dutch express their willingness to give satisfaction, 174; Dutch East Indiamen seized in reprisal for, ii. 151; promise of the Dutch to investigate the truth about, 329
Amiens, Buckingham at, i. 182
Anderson, Chief Justice, his resolution quoted by Heath, ii. 185; referred to by Shilton, 215; produced by Eliot, 216
Andrewes, Lancelot, Bishop of Winchester, is unable to come to James in his last illness, i. 161; takes part in a conference on Montague's book, ii. 7
Anglesea, the Countess of, tells the Duchess of Buckingham of her husband's murder, ii. 337
Angoulême, the Duke of, establishes himself near Rochelle, ii, 135; demands the surrender of Rochelle, 137
Anne of Austria, Queen of France, Buckingham's insolence to, i. 182
Anstruther, Sir Robert, sent on a mission to Germany and Denmark, i. 4; starts for Denmark, 83; urges Christian IV. to take arms, 134; his negotiation in North Germany, 137; gives an account of his negotiation, 144; receives money for the garrison of Stade, ii. 269
Appello Cæsarem, written by Montague, i. 209
Apsley, Sir Allen, takes part in victualling the Cadiz fleet, i. 326; advises Buckingham to detain the 'St. Peter,' 352; is probably the suggestor of the forced loan, ii. 98

Argall, Sir Samuel, captures the 'St. Peter' of Havre de Grace, i. 314; advises Wimbledon to land at St. Mary Port, 317; reports an attack on the ships in Cadiz harbour to be impracticable, 322
Argyle, Earl of (Archibald Campbell) lives in exile, ii. 15
Artois, offered by Buckingham to France, i. 177, 180
Arundel, Countess of, takes her place in the Queen's carriage, i. 184; contrives to carry out her son's marriage with Elizabeth Stuart, ii. 15; is placed in confinement, 16
— Earl of (Thomas Howard), opposed to war with Spain, i. 8; said to have approved of the conduct of Middlesex, 65; his part in the opposition to Buckingham, 282; Buckingham's feelings towards, 334; story of his son's marriage, ii. 15; he is sent to the Tower, 16; his case taken up by the House of Lords, 39; the Lords insist on his liberation, 58; is set at liberty, 68; sent into confinement, 75; left otherwise unmolested, 87; takes his place in the Parliament of 1628, 202; proposes a modification of the Commons' resolutions, 233; named a member of the Lords' Committee on Imprisonment, 253; takes a middle course, 254; clause proposed by him and Weston, 256; supports the omission of the clause, 266; restored to favour, 320
Ashburnham, John, sent to Paris as a negotiator, ii. 142
Austria, rising of the peasants in, ii. 93

BADEN, the Margrave of, defeated at Heiligenhafen, ii. 149
Bacon, Francis, Viscount St. Alban, his name removed from the list of Privy Council, i. 168; death of, ii. 72; extract from his essay on Innovations, 295, note 1
Bagg, Sir James, takes part in victualling the Cadiz fleet, i. 326; becomes joint Vice-Admiral of Devon with Sir John Drake, ii. 100; complains of want of money, 155
Balfour, Sir William, is sent to Germany to levy horse, ii. 194
Baltimore, Lord (George Calvert), excluded from the Privy Council, i. 168; is consulted by Buckingham about his negotiation with Spain, ii. 121; accompanies Buckingham to the King, 122
Banbury, refusal of, to contribute to the billeting of the soldiers, ii. 99
— Earl of (William Knollys), refuses to demand ship money, ii. 198
Barbarini, Cardinal, his mission to France, i. 176
Barcelona, treaty of, ii. 37
Barrington, Sir Francis, imprisoned for refusing to sit on the commission for the loan, ii. 104
Bassompierre, his mission to England announced to Carleton, ii. 93; arrives in London, 95; comes to an agreement about the household, 96; discusses the question of the prizes, 97; is entertained by Buckingham, 100; leaves London, 103; sails from Dover, 106; is disavowed by Lewis, 109
Bautru, M., brings letters to England, i. 343, note 2
Baxter, Richard, his account of his father's religion, i. 211
Beaulieu, Charles at, i. 305
Becher, Sir William, visits Rochelle to offer Buckingham's assistance, ii. 131; his explanation of the rejection of the offer, 134; sent to England to ask for reinforcements, 140; returns with men and money, 141
Bedford, Earl of (Francis Russell), named a member of the Lords' Committee on Imprisonment, ii. 253
Bellin, ambassador to Gustavus Adolphus from the Elector of Brandenburg, i. 141; goes to England to invite James to join in the war, 142; sent to France, 143; conditions proposed to him, 144
Benevolence, suggested by Sir E. Coke, i. 292
Berkshire, makes little difficulty about the forced loan, ii. 112; the Earl of Banbury refuses to demand ship money from, 198
— Earl of (Thomas Howard), named for the Chancellorship of the University of Cambridge in opposition to Buckingham, ii. 67
Bethlen Gabor, expected to join Christian IV., ii. 94; is reduced to sue for peace, 124; makes peace with the Emperor, 148
Billeting soldiers, complained of in the House of Commons, ii. 207, 227

Biscay, transports in the harbours of, ii. 86
Bishopries, the North German, position of, i. 135
Blackwall, the fleet at, i. 185
Blainville, Le Sieur de, received by Charles at Salisbury, i. 327; ordered to object to Buckingham's visiting France, 329; complains to Charles and Buckingham, 331; comments on Buckingham's language, 332; proposed recall of, 343, note 2; remonstrates against the sale of prize goods, 347; is informed that Charles will defend the Huguenots, 350; is accused of stirring up strife between Charles and the Queen, 354, 364; is refused admission to Court, 365; his lodgings at Durham House, ii. 13 tumult in consequence of the seizure of English Catholics frequenting his chapel, 14; offer of Lewis to recall, 35; returns to France, 36
Blavet, seizure of French ships at, i. 151, 331
Bolingbroke, Earl of (Oliver St. John), refuses payment of the forced loan, ii. 106
Bordeaux, seizure of the wine fleet at, ii. 102
Bramston, J., argues on behalf of the five prisoners for the loan, ii. 182
Brandenburg, the Elector of. *See* George William
Breda, commencement of the siege of, i. 117; efforts to send Mansfeld to its relief, 122, 127, 131; surrender of, 186; exhaustion of the Spanish treasury caused by the siege of, ii. 121
Bremen, surrender of, demanded by Gustavus, i. 142
Brett, Arthur, supported by Middlesex in opposition to Buckingham, i. 62, 63
— Sir Alexander, rallies his men at the landing on the Isle of Rhé, ii. 133; attack upon his regiment in the retreat from St. Martin's, 162
Bridgewater (John Egerton), becomes a Privy Councillor, ii. 87
Bristol, Earl of (John Digby), recalled from Spain, i. 3; arrives in England, 66; is placed in confinement and demands a trial, 67; refuses to acknowledge error, 71; is kept at Sherborne, 72; persists in refusing to acknowledge that he has been wrong, 155; favour shown him by James, 156; his name removed from the list of Privy Councillors, 168; receives a visit from Pembroke, 333; his treatment by Charles, ii. 39; asks to be tried or allowed to sit in Parliament, 41; accuses Buckingham, and is accused of high treason, 42; his defence, 45; his right to counsel contested by the King, 46; is allowed counsel, 65; committed to the Tower, 75; his Star Chamber prosecution and release, 202; takes a middle course in the debate on the King's power to imprison, 233; named a member of the Lords' Committee on Imprisonment, 253; takes a middle course, 254; recommends the Lords to declare that they will respect the prerogative, 266; proposes that the Lords shall represent to Charles the true state of the kingdom, 288; objects to the first answer to the Petition, 290; restored to favour, 320
Brooke, Lord (Fulk Greville), becomes a member of the Council of War, i. 58; appointed a member of the Committee for Foreign Affairs, 172; proposal of Heath to produce him in evidence, 295
Buckeridge, John, Bishop of Rochester, joins Howson and Laud in giving an opinion on Montague's books, i. 263; proposes that the Petition of Right be referred to the Judges, ii. 265; becomes Bishop of Ely, 314
Buckingham, Countess of, administers remedies to James, i. 160; accompanies the Queen to Canterbury, 184; receives the Queen in a balcony, 363; enters the Queen's household, ii. 95; writes to find fault with her son, 152; her interview with Williams, 325
— Duchess of, proposed as Lady of the Bedchamber to the Queen, i. 305; enters the Queen's household, ii. 95; her letters to her husband, 151; writes to Dr. Moore, 152; begs her husband to take precautions against danger, 335; rushes into a gallery to see her husband's body after the murder, 336; erects a monument to the Duke, 345
— Duke of (George Villiers), returns from Spain, i. 1; his influence over Charles, 2; hears of a suggestion that Charles shall marry Henrietta Maria, 4; is angry with the Commissioners for Spanish affairs,

7; persuades James to refuse the Spanish offers, 7; is opposed by Pembroke, 8; is reported to have lost James's favour, 10; delivers to Parliament a narrative of the Prince's proceedings in Spain, 15; accused by the Spanish ambassadors, 19; his rudeness to the King, 24, 28; discusses the prospects of the war with the King, 29; recommends the Lords to enquire into the insult on the Spanish embassy, 35; his alleged intention to dethrone the King, 40; receives information of the charges against him, 43; nature of his influence over James, 46; is again accused by the Spanish ambassadors, 60; is cleared by the Privy Council, 61; takes part in the impeachment of Middlesex, 64; determines not to allow Bristol to see the King, 66; urges Bristol to retire to Sherborne, 71; his claims upon the East India Company, 73; is gained over by Effiat, 91; urges Lewis to accept an arrangement about the marriage treaty, 96; supports Effiat, 100; is eager to begin war on a large scale, 104; wishes money to be given to Mansfeld, 106; is afraid of meeting Parliament, 108; his misunderstanding with the French ambassadors, 123; argues with Mansfeld about his proposed landing in the Netherlands, 128; orders him to go to Calais, 129; agrees to allow Mansfeld to pass through Holland, 130; forms extensive schemes, 146; supports the scheme for an attack upon Genoa, 148; proposes to send a fleet against Spain, 149; supports Richelieu's request for ships to be sent against Rochelle, 152; his strong position at Court, 154; receives Calvert's avowal that he is a Catholic, 156; becomes Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, 157; refuses to become Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, 158; receives a suggestion from Williams that he shall be Steward of the Household, 159; his conduct at James's sickness, 161; his intimacy with Charles, 168; disgraces Cottington, 170; appointed a member of the Committee for Foreign Affairs, 171; expected to command the fleet in person, 174; his mission to France to propose an attack upon the Spanish Netherlands, 177; ceases to desire to lend ships against Rochelle, 178; arrives in Paris, and mediates between the French king and the Huguenots, 180; demands a strict alliance with England, 181; his insolence to the French queen, 182; comes to London to urge the Commons to vote a large supply, 223; his interview with Eliot, 224; his dissatisfaction with Williams, 232; his wishes about the ships lent to the French, 237; directs Pennington to surrender them, 243; his negotiation about them at Rochester, 244; writes to Nicholas that there is peace in France, 245; determines to throw over the Catholics, 258; terms of agreement with the Commons proposed to, 279; feels difficulty in agreeing to them, 280; explains away the promises to France, 281; appears in Christ Church Hall to defend his conduct, 282; his statement criticised, 285; attacked by name by Seymour, 294; asks the King not to dissolve Parliament, 295; his intentions after the dissolution, 302; proposes to go to the Hague, 309; retains the title of generalissimo of the Cadiz expedition, 312; visits the fleet at Plymouth, 314; his part in the failure of the expedition, 324; is summoned to Salisbury to hear Blainville's proposals, 327; proposes to visit France after forming a great Protestant League, 328; is instructed to mediate between Lewis and the Huguenots, 330; his explanations to Blainville, 331; Blainville's comments on his language, 332; his journey to the Hague, 338; proposes an attack upon Dunkirk, 339; agrees to the Treaty of the Hague, and returns to England, 341; receives the news of the failure at Cadiz, 342; his conduct about the French prizes, 345; attempts to borrow money to take to the Hague, 346; informs Blainville that his master will defend the Huguenots, 350; incenses Charles against the Queen, 363; presides over the conference about Montague's books, ii. 8, note 1; consents to the release of the 'St. Peter,' 9; feeling of the Lords about, 11; Dr. Turner's queries about, 21; the King's speech in defence of, 23; is charged by Eliot with

being at the bottom of all that is wrong, 25; defends himself before both Houses, 29; tells the truth about the ships lent to the French, 30; continuation of the Commons' proceedings against, 31; charges against, voted by the Commons, 32; informs the Lords on what conditions the King had granted Bristol's writ, 41; charges brought by Bristol against, 44; impeached, 46; declared by Charles not to be personally responsible, 47; articles of the impeachment of, 48; absents himself from the proceedings of the second day, 49; charges against, summed up by Eliot, 51; compared to Sejanus, 55; accuses Digges of offensive language, 62; is a candidate for the Chancellorship of the University of Cambridge, 66; is elected, 67; lays his defence before the Lords, 67; challenges enquiry, 68; dismissal of, demanded by the Commons, 69; his case appointed to be tried in the Star Chamber, 75; sentence pronounced in his favour, 75; allies himself with Pembroke, 87; is mobbed by soldiers and sailors, 92; is said to have wished to debase the coinage, 93; writes to Charles about the battle of Lutter, 94, note 2; is won over by Bassompierre, 96; entertains Bassompierre at York House, 100; proposes to go to France, 101; urges Bassompierre to let him go at once, 103; his unpopularity, 104; orders Pennington to attack the French ships at Havre, 107; breaks off the negotiation with France, 109; thinks it possible to fight Spain and France at once, 111; makes overtures to Spain, 119; employs Gerbier to negotiate a peace with Spain, 120; terms on which he expects to make peace, 121; goes to Portsmouth to command the expedition to Rhé, and receives his instructions, 128; sails from Stokes Bay, 130; anchors off St. Martin's, 131; lands on the Isle of Rhé, 132; leads his men to St. Martin's, 133; determines to besiege St. Martin's, 135; turns the siege into a blockade, 136; exchanges presents with Toiras, 137; demands reinforcements, 138; opens a negotiation with the French government, 142; receives an offer of surrender, 143; resolves to continue the siege though the fort is relieved, 144; his chances of success, 146; is warned by his correspondents in England of the feeling against him, 151, 157; is reluctant to give up the siege, 159; danger of his position, 160; fails in storming the fort and orders a retreat, 161; his losses on the march to the place of embarkation, 163; his conduct as a commander, 163; returns to England, 167; his plans for the future, 187; resolves to continue the war, and asks that Parliament may be called, 190; advocates an excise and a standing army, 193; his saying reported by Coke to the Commons, 226; does not venture to divide against Saye's motion for delay in the consideration of the Commons' resolutions, 233; fails in procuring their rejection, 234; explains his assent to the amendments on the Petition of Right, 256; wishes a saving of the King's rights to be added to the Petition, 259; objects to the abandonment of the additional clause to the Petition, 267; is consulted by Charles on the answer to the Petition of Right, 276; attacked by Eliot, though his name is not mentioned, 280; named by Coke, 286; formally blamed in the remonstrance, 299; supported by the King, 301; documents connected with his prosecution in the Star Chamber removed from the file, 303; satirical verses against, 304; foreign policy of, 315; wishes to make peace with Spain, 318; his difficult position after the prorogation, 327; surrenders the Cinque Ports, 328; his difficulties about Rochelle, 330; finds that the equipment of the fleet goes on slowly, 331; welcomes Contarini's proposal of mediation, 332; prepares for carrying the war into Germany, 333; his foreboding of death, 334; quells a mutiny at Portsmouth, 335; his assassination, 336; his funeral, 344; his monument, 345; sketch of his career, 346

Burgh, Sir John, second in command of the expedition to Rhé, ii. 128; rallies his men at the landing, 133; is killed, 142

Button, Sir Thomas, appointed a member of the Council of War, i. 58

CAD

CADIZ, expedition to, suggested by Buckingham, i. 149; preparations for, watched over by Charles, 173; proposal to divert it to the coast of Flanders, 174; agreement with the Dutch about, 307; troops for, quartered at Plymouth, 312; arrival of three Dutch ships for, 313; joined by the other Dutch ships, 315; sailing of, 316; arrival of at Cadiz, 317; attack upon Puntal, 318; attempt to pursue the Spanish ships, 320; march of the land forces to the bridge, 321; retreat to Puntal, 322; re-embarkation of, 323; return of to England, 324

Calais, Spanish goods landed at, i. 345; presumptions against the merchants of, 348; proposed attack on, 167

Calthrop, Mr. C. (or Calthorpe), argues on behalf of the five prisoners for the loan, ii. 182

Calvert, Sir George, opposes war with Spain, i. 8; avows himself a Catholic, resigns the secretaryship, and is created Lord Baltimore, 156. *See* Baltimore, Lord

Calvinism in England, i. 210; reaction against, 212

Cambridge, Chancellorship of the University of, conferred upon Buckingham, ii. 66

Camerarius, his opinion of Mansfeld, i. 113

Canterbury, Charles at, i. 183; Buckingham meets Bassompierre at, ii. 104

Carleton, Lord (Dudley Carleton), sent to France to explain the dismissal of the Queen's attendants, ii. 90; is recalled to England, 92; acquaints Joachimi with Buckingham's negotiation with Spain, 121; is sent ambassador to the Hague, 122; is directed to watch the building of French ships in Holland, 150; gains influence over Buckingham, 327; is raised to a Viscountcy, 328. *See* Dorchester, Viscount

Carleton, Sir Dudley, gives an account of the sufferings of Mansfeld's army, i. 132; obtains a loan from the States for their support, 186; his mission to France in conjunction with Holland, 344; his interview with Richelieu, 349; progress of his negotiation, 352, 357, 360; urges the Commons to grant supply, ii. 32; ordered home, 35; heads the deputation asking for a conference for Buckingham's impeachment, 46; argues that the King was right in imprisoning Eliot and Digges, 59; threatens the Commons with the possibility of the King's governing without a Parliament, 60; created Lord Carleton, 65. *See* Carleton, Lord

Carlisle, Earl of (James Hay) supports Buckingham against Spain, i. 6; conducts Mansfeld to Rochester, 57; sent to France to negotiate the Prince's marriage, 85, 86; gives an account of La Vieuville's proposal, 89; objects to Richelieu's article, 99; expresses his dissatisfaction at the behaviour of the French, 108, 110; warns Charles against trusting the French too completely, 176; Eliot's opinion of, 259, note 1; proposed Continental mission of, ii. 187; proceeds to Turin, 316; has an audience of the Infanta Isabella, 319

Carew, Lord (George Carew), becomes a member of the Council of War, i. 58; absent from Oxford during the sitting of Parliament, 295; created Earl of Totness, 357. *See* Totness, Earl of

Caron, Noel de, his interview with James about the massacre of Amboyna, i. 79; death of, 159

Carondelet, employed by the Spanish ambassadors to bring charges against Buckingham, i. 40; gives information to Williams, 42

Catesby, George, refuses to pay the loan, ii. 168

Catholics, the English, James explains his treatment of, i. 13; bill against them introduced into the Commons, 16; bitter feeling against them, 37; the Commons ask for execution of the laws against, 38; Charles declares that they shall not be favoured in consequence of his marriage, 56; James supports this engagement, 58; their position an object of discussion in the negotiations in France, 88; favour promised to them in the Treaty, 119; suspension of the laws against them, 120; further demands for, rejected by James, 154; proceedings against, stopped on Charles's marriage, 175; orders for stopping the proceedings rescinded, 179; Seymour's motion for the execution of

CAT

the laws against, 194; petition of the Commons against, 197; promise of the King to execute the laws against, 231, 233; their cause pleaded by the French ambassadors, 235; Charles's difficulties about, 255; Heath declares that the King will take measures against, 274; discussion in the Council about, 282; demands of Lewis XIII. on behalf of, 328; measures taken against, 336; petition against, received by the King, ii. 218; demands of the Commons for the execution of the laws against, 299

Cecil, Sir Edward, becomes a member of the Council of War, i. 58; appointed to command the Cadiz expedition, 312; reports badly of the troops, 313; created Viscount Wimbledon, 314. *See* Wimbledon, Viscount

— Sir Robert, anecdote of, i. 270

Charenton, visit of Holland and Carleton to the Huguenot-church at, i. 358

Charles Emmanuel, Duke of Savoy, Wake's mission to, i. 4; joins the league for the recovery of the Valtelline, 105; proposes to attack Genoa, 147; wishes to fight against France, ii. 126; asks for the help of an English army, 147

Charles I., King of England (*see* Charles, Prince of Wales); his accession, i. 165; orders Parliament to be summoned at once, 169; establishes order at Court, 170; agrees to furnish money to Christian IV., 172; watches over the preparation of the fleet for Cadiz, 173; is married by proxy, and orders all proceedings against the Catholics to be stopped, 175; directs that these proceedings shall go on, 179; receives his wife at Dover, 183; enters London with the Queen, 184; meets his first Parliament, 189; his speech at the opening of the Session, 190; his mode of meeting Parliament, 192; is not opposed to persecution, 197; his want of confidence in the Commons, 200; his dissatisfaction at the small grant voted, 202; determines to ask for more, 223; receives the petition on religion, 230; defends Montague as his chaplain, 231; his disputes with the Queen, 233; pressed by the French ambassadors to show favour to the Catholics, 235; his double dealing about the ships lent to the French, 237; his difficulty in meeting the remonstrances of the French, 240; sends orders to Pennington to give up the ships, 254; summons the Houses to meet him in Christ Church Hall, 264; requests the Commons to vote money, 287; continues to support Buckingham, 299; his quarrel with the Commons, 300; consults the Privy Council about sending out the fleet, 304; his domestic difficulties, 304; wishes to place English Ladies of the Bedchamber about his wife, 305; prefers an attack upon Spain to war in Germany, 307; declares his intention of persisting in the war, 308; hopes to place himself at the head of a Protestant alliance, 309; visits the fleet at Plymouth, 314; discussion in his presence on the direction to be taken by the fleet, 317; receives Blainville, 327; instructs Buckingham to mediate between Lewis and the Huguenots, 330; repels Blainville's overtures, 331; dismisses Williams, 335; makes the Opposition leaders sheriffs, 337; receives the news of the failure at Cadiz, 342; orders money to be raised by the sale of prize goods, 346; gives way before Blainville's remonstrance, 347; determines to relieve Rochelle, 350; insists upon satisfaction being given by Lewis XIII. to the Huguenots, 352; is dissatisfied with the terms offered in France, 353; accuses Blainville of alienating the Queen from him, 354; his coronation, 355; learns that an agreement is made between Lewis XIII. and the Huguenots, and that France is ready to join him in war, 359; is dissatisfied with the terms agreed on, 360; orders his ambassadors to protest, 361; finds fault with the French plan for co-operating with him in Germany, 362; his altercation with the Queen, 363; demands Blainville's recall, 365; opens his second Parliament, ii. 1; receives overtures from Richelieu, 12; expects France to do more, 13; orders the seizure of English subjects attending Blainville's chapel, 14; part taken by him about the marriage of Elizabeth Stuart, 15; sends Arundel to the Tower, 16; consults Heath about the right of the Commons to enquire

into the proceedings of the Council of War, 17; his conversation with Totness about the inquiry, 19; directs Weston to ask for supply, 20; demands justice against Clement Coke and Turner, 22; speaks in defence of Buckingham, 23; refuses to accept Eliot's charge as true, 27; requires the Commons to give up the enquiry, 28; desists from opposing them, 31; effect of his conduct upon the French Court, 34; does nothing to keep on good terms with France, 35; declares his readiness to support the Huguenots, 36; his treatment of Bristol, 39; grants Bristol's writ conditionally, 41; accuses Bristol of high treason, 42; declares Bristol's statements to be untrue, 45; his consent to Buckingham's acts, 47; vindicates Buckingham to the Lords, 57; controversy of, with the Lords about Arundel's imprisonment, 58; imprisons Eliot and Digges, 59; orders Weston to charge Eliot with things extrajudicial to the House, 63; releases Eliot, 64; demands immediate supply, 69; his dissatisfaction with the Commons' remonstrance, 71; dissolves Parliament, 72; tries new counsels, 74; calls in the remonstrance, 75; attempts to borrow money, 76; demands a free gift from the counties, 77; calls out the musters, 83; demands ships from the maritime counties, 85; financial difficulties of, 86; sells plate, 87; quarrel with his wife about her jointure, 88; dismisses the Queen's French attendants, 90; refuses to debase the coinage, 93; fails to supply money to Christian IV., 94; proposes to send four regiments to the King of Denmark, 95; is won over by Bassompierre, 96; resolves not to summon Parliament, 104; dismisses Chief Justice Crew, 105; directs an attack upon French ships at Havre, 107; believes that Richelieu has sold himself to the Pope, 117; believes himself to be strong enough to overpower him, 118; is consulted about Buckingham's proposed treaty with Spain, and refuses to treat apart from the Dutch, 122; wishes to do something in Germany, 123; accompanies Buckingham to Portsmouth, and gives him his instructions for the expedition to Rhé, 128; his eagerness to support Buckingham, 138; insists upon reinforcements being sent to him, 141; orders the seizure of three Dutch East Indiamen, 151; feels anxious about Buckingham, 155; supports him, 158; his reception of Buckingham, 167; orders Abbot to license Sibthorpe's sermon, 173; orders the licensing of Manwaring's sermons, 177; resolves to continue the war, 191; proposes to levy an excise, 192; sends Dulbier to Germany to levy horse, 194; orders writs to be issued for a Parliament, 196; orders a collection of ship-money, 197; withdraws his command and issues a commission to consider an excise, 198; his speech at the opening of his third Parliament, 201; fails to accept Wentworth's offers, 208; feels his want of money, 210; expresses satisfaction with the Commons, 221; pleased with the vote of five subsidies, 226; forbids the Houses to separate for the Easter recess, 228; orders the Commons to vote supply at once, 229; expostulates with the Commons, 231; offers to confirm Magna Charta and the six statutes, 238; rejects Wentworth's proposal for a *Habeas Corpus* Bill, 243; is no longer trusted, 244; determines to dissolve Parliament, 252; writes to the Lords, arguing in defence of his claim to imprison without showing cause, 253; determines to deliver Rochelle, 270; orders Denbigh to return to Rochelle, 272; objects to surrender his claim to commit without showing cause, 273; consults the Judges on the answer to be given to the Petition, 274; consults Buckingham, 276; gives an unsatisfactory answer, 277; orders the House not to proceed with the remonstrance, 282; orders the adjournment of the House, 288; permits the Commons to continue their debates, 289; promises to answer the Lords' request for a better answer to the Petition, 290; gives the Royal assent to the Petition of Right, 291; part taken by him in licensing Manwaring's sermons, 297; refuses to dismiss Buckingham, 301; rejects the Commons' remonstrance, 303; refuses to agree to the Tonnage and Poundage Bill, 306; prorogues Parliament, 308;

his position considered, 309; Church promotions of, 314; still entertains hopes of recovering the Palatinate, 316; does not intend to withdraw from the Continental war, 317; informs the Prince of Orange of his negotiations with Spain, 318; his visit to Southwick, 331; is consulted by Buckingham about the Venetian mediation, 333; receives the news of Buckingham's murder, 338; consults the Judges about torturing Felton, 347; sends Lindsey to relieve Rochelle, 349; orders Lindsey to persevere, 353; failure of his policy, 355; his prospects for the future, 356

Charles, Prince of Wales, returns from Madrid, i. 1; his eagerness for war with Spain, 2; gives assurances that he will never marry the Infanta, 7; reconciles Buckingham and Pembroke, 9; explains away his father's hesitation, 26; is annoyed at his father's reply to Parliament, 28; announces his father's readiness to go to war, 30; possibility of his marriage with a French princess announced to the Commons, 30; receives information about the Spanish ambassadors from Williams, 42; declares that he will never do anything for the Recusants in consequence of his marriage, 56; accompanies his father to Windsor, 60; takes offence at Middlesex, 63; takes an active part in his impeachment, 66; his objection to concede anything to France about the English Catholics, 88; refuses to agree to an article for the Catholics, 95; urges his father to further compliance, 101; persuades his father to accept Richelieu's proposed private article, 109; signs the private engagement, 119; is anxious to go to Paris, 152. *See* Charles I.

Chatham, workmen at, unpaid, ii. 112

Cheshire, payment of the forced loan in, ii. 113

Chevreuse, Duchess of, exiled by Richelieu, ii. 126

— Duke of, acts as proxy for Charles at his marriage, i. 175; protests against the treatment of the English Catholics, 235

Chichester [of Belfast, Lord (Arthur Chichester), offends Buckingham, i. 7; hesitates to approve of a breach with Spain, 8; appointed a member of the Council of War, 58; dies, 159; papers said to have been left by, 295

Chillingworth, William, informs against Gill, ii. 34, 43

Christian IV., King of Denmark, mission of Anstruther to, i. 4; receives Anstruther, 134; his position with relation to the North German Bishoprics, 135; his rivalry with Gustavus, 141; English proposal that he and Gustavus shall serve under the Elector of Brandenburg, 143; his demands upon James, 144; receives assurance of support from Charles, 172; his difficulties, 307; offers of Lewis XIII. to, 327; agreement of the English and Dutch to supply money to, 341; Richelieu offers to send support to, 359; his position in 1626, ii. 93; is defeated at Lutter, 94; complains of being deserted by Charles, 124; his disasters in 1627, 147; gives up the conflict in the open field, 149; holds to the fortresses at the mouth of the Elbe, 268; continues to resist the Imperialists, 317

Christian of Brunswick, in command of French cavalry, i. 131; sickness amongst his men, 134; his position in the Empire, 137

Church of England, the parties in, i. 210; proclamation for the peace of, ii. 74; ecclesiastical divisions of, 169

City of London, refuses to lend money to the King, ii. 77; objects to furnish ships for the King's service, 86; again refuses to lend, 95; its fleet complained of by Pennington, 108; mutiny in its ships, 111; lends the King money, 189

Clare, Earl of (John Holles), resists the payment of the forced loan, ii. 106; proposes a joint committee on the Petition of Right, 265

Clerke, Edward, speaks in defence of Buckingham, i. 278; spreads news that there is no danger of a rupture with France, ii. 12; his dependence upon Buckingham, 119; his mission to the King of Denmark, 148; brings to Morgan bills of exchange which are not cashed, 149

Clerkenwell, Jesuit meeting at, ii. 209

Coin, the proposal to debase the, ii. 92

Coke, Clement, words used by, ii. 21; ordered to explain them, 23

— Sir Edward, suggested mission of, to Ireland, i. 12; defends Buckingham in the House of Commons, 19; supports Rudyerd's four points, 26; objects to a large grant of supply, 31; carries up charges against Middlesex, 64; advises that there shall be no committee for grievances, 194; holds that Montague's case is one for the civil jurisdiction, 219; moves at Oxford that a committee shall consider the expenditure of the last subsidies, 257; objects to liberty of printing, 259; gives an opinion on the proper way of dealing with Montague, 260; calls attention to the finances, 274; suggests a benevolence, 292; made sheriff to exclude him from Parliament, 337; thinks that Buckingham should not be impeached a second time, ii. 201; his proposed bill on imprisonment, 203; says that he cannot fly at all grievances, 208; argues that the King cannot arrest any man, 212; disconcerted by Shilton, 215; recovers himself and appeals to Anderson's resolution, 218; carries the resolutions of the Commons to the Lords, 226; proposes to petition the King upon billeting soldiers, 227; moves that the dates for paying subsidies be fixed, 229; criticises the Lords' propositions, 236; brings into committee the bill on the liberties of the subject, 240; wishes the bill to be voted as it stands, 241; attempts to conciliate the King, 245; proposes a Petition of Right, 250; objects to the phrase 'sovereign power,' 258; names the Duke as the cause of miseries, 286

— Sir John, writes to forbid Pennington to meddle with the civil wars in France, i. 178; selected as the organ of the Government in the Parliament of 1625, 228; demands further supply, 229; writes to Pennington that he is not to be employed against the French Protestants, 237; states the case of the sailors on board Pennington's ships, 241; his plan for meeting the difficulty, 242; explains to the Commons the King's plans for the war, 266; defends the Navy Commission against Eliot, 277; made Secretary of State, 311; urges the sale of French prize goods, 347; writes a despatch objecting to the French offers of co-operation in Germany, 362; proposes a grant of supply in the Parliament of 1626, ii. 2; again demands supply, 25; is denounced by Buckingham, 167; acknowledges that the law has been broken, 208; tells the Commons about the Jesuits at Clerkenwell, 209; his story makes no impression on the House, 210; urges the Commons to grant supply, 218; brings a message from the King assuring the Commons that he has no wish to deprive them of their liberties, 221; reports Buckingham's sayings to the Commons, 226; says that the Commons are attacking power itself, 229; is asked to explain his meaning, 230; brings a message requiring the House to rest on the King's word, and adds that he shall continue to commit without showing cause, 243; denies that the laws have been violated, 245; proposes that the King's message shall not be debated in committee, 248; objects to Pym's language, 249; suggests a petition to the King, 250

Coloma, Don Carlos, protests against the loan of English regiments to the Dutch, i. 80; remains in England, 84. *See* Spanish ambassadors

Commissioners for Spanish Affairs consulted about the Spanish proposals about the Palatinate, i. 6; offend Buckingham by asking for more information, 7; shrink from advising war with Spain, 8; advise a temporising answer, 9.

Committee for Foreign Affairs, formation of, i. 171

Common fame, accepted as a ground for proceeding against Buckingham, ii. 32

Commons, the House of (1624), debates in, upon the Spanish treaties, i. 20; its ideas on the conduct of the war, 22; petitions for a breach with Spain, 23; discusses the King's demand for money, 25; is dissatisfied with the King's reply to its offers of assistance, 28; its feelings about the French marriage, 30; discusses the question of supply, 30; votes subsidies, 31; makes no enquiry into the insult on the Spanish embassy, 35; its bitter feeling against the Catholics, 37; petitions for execution of the Recusancy

laws, 38; impeaches Middlesex, 64; presents grievances to the King, 69; is dissatisfied at his criticisms, 70; (1625) its debates about religion, 194; votes a small supply, 200; applies to Abbot about Montague's book, 209; discusses Montague's case, 218; its reception of Charles's demand for further supply, 229; adjourns to Oxford, 231; reassembles at Oxford, 257; its feelings at the King's demand for further supplies, 267; debate on foreign policy, 269; does not wish to support Mansfeld and Christian IV., 275; Conservatism of, 300; (1626) enquires into the proceedings of the Council of War, ii. 17; difficulty of its position, 20; claims a right to search out the causes of the King's wants, 23; listens to Turner's queries about the Duke, 21; enquires into Buckingham's conduct, 31; resolves that it can proceed upon common fame, 32; impeaches Buckingham, 46; pretensions put forward by, 47; its difficulty in discovering the truth, 48; demands Buckingham's imprisonment, 58; breaks up on hearing of the imprisonment of Eliot and Digges, 59; declares against Charles's right to imprison its members, 60; refuses to transact business till Eliot is liberated, 63; takes offence at Buckingham's election at Cambridge and prepares a remonstrance, 67; proposes to incorporate Bristol's charges in the remonstrance, 69; demands the dismissal of Buckingham, 70; its claim to supremacy, 71; its remonstrance called in, 75; (1628) schemes canvassed at Court for making it pliable, 197; goes into committee on the liberty of the subject, 211; its resolutions on the liberty of the subject, 218; its resolutions laid before the Lords, 226; is kept sitting during the Easter recess, 228; debate in, on the Lords' propositions, 236; appoints a committee to prepare a bill on the liberties of the subject, 239; adjourns on being required to rest on the King's word, 243; presents a remonstrance to the King, 246; sends up the Petition of Right to the Lords, 252; objects to the Lords' addition to the Petition of Right, 257; rejects the Lords' proposal for a joint committee, 266; considers a remonstrance on the state of the kingdom, 281; impeaches Manwaring, 294; proceeds with the remonstrance, 298; dismissal of Buckingham demanded by, 303; discusses the Tonnage and Poundage Bill, 305; draws up a remonstrance on the subject, 306; its case against the King, 312

Compiègne, the French Court at, i. 180

Congress of the Hague, proposed, i. 143

Contarini, Alvise, Venetian ambassador, objects to Italy being made the scene of war, ii. 319; proposes that Venice shall mediate between England and France, 332; his last interview with Buckingham, 334

Contraband of war, definition of, ii. 345. *See* Prize goods, French

Convocation, Coke wishes books to be referred to, i. 259; Laud's opinion of its place in the constitution, 263

Conway, Lord (Edward Conway), appointed a member of the Committee for Foreign Affairs, i. 172; orders Pennington not to give his ships up to the French, 237; directs Pennington to surrender the ships, 241; asks the Commons for money for the war, 265; gives protection to a Roman Catholic lady, 275; his language to Mansell, 292; writes a despatch to Holland and Carleton ordering them to protest against the terms agreed on between Lewis XIII. and the Huguenots, 360; assures the Commons that Buckingham has done nothing without counsel, ii. 30; believes that the French do not wish to quarrel with England, 35; sends away the Queen's French attendants, 90; speaks of Buckingham as a Judas, 122; sends orders about reinforcements for Rhé, 155

Conway, Sir Edward, his letter to the States General on the plot for the division of the Netherlands, i. 4; supports Buckingham against Spain, 6; speaks on supply, 31; becomes a member of the Council of War, 58; signs the private engagement in the marriage treaty, 120; conveys to Mansfeld's colonels the King's orders not to go to Breda, 130; suggests that Gustavus and Christian shall serve under the Elector of Brandenburg, 143; created Lord Conway. *See* Conway, Lord

Corbet, Sir John, demands a *habeas corpus*, ii. 182
Coronation of Charles I., i. 355
Coryton, William, explains on what terms he is ready to vote supply, i, 276; adheres at once to the Petition of Right, ii. 250
Cottington, Sir Francis, discarded by Buckingham, i. 120
Cotton, Sir Robert, speech ascribed to, i. 289, note 1; presence of, at the coronation, 355; objects to the debasement of the coinage, ii. 92; meeting of the leaders of the Commons at his house, 201; company assembling in his house discuss Buckingham's murder, 342
Council, the. *See* Privy Council
Council of War appointed, i. 58; refuses to supply Mansfeld, 104; consents to allow two months' pay to him, 112; discussions in, referred to by Mansell, 292; its proceedings defended by Heath, 295; its conduct questioned by the Commons, ii. 17
Courtenay, Sir William, his regiment refuses to land on the Isle of Rhé, ii. 132
Coventry, Lord, argues that the Council can commit without showing cause, ii. 233; declares that the King's word must be taken, 238; named a member of the Lords' Committee on Imprisonment, 253; his opinion on the King's right to imprison, 254; moves that the additional clause to the petition be sent back to the Commons, 259; ordered to acquaint the King with the feeling in the House of Lords, 289
Coventry, Sir Thomas, becomes Lord Keeper, i. 366; his speech at the opening of the Parliament of 1626, ii. 1; directs the Commons to abstain from enquiry into the acts of the King's servants, 28; sends Bristol his writ, 42; explains that men refusing to be pressed cannot be hung, 115; created Lord Coventry, 232. *See* Coventry, Lord
Craig, Dr., offended at Lady Buckingham's application of remedies to the King, i. 161
Crew, Sir Randal, dismissed from the Chief Justiceship, ii. 105
— Sir Thomas, his address to the King as Speaker, i. 191
Cromwell, Lord (Thomas Cromwell), gives an account of the state of Mansfeld's army, i. 132; complains of Mansfeld, 187; informs Buckingham of his unpopularity, 311
Crown jewels, the, proposal to pawn, i. 309; refusal of the Dutch merchants to accept them, ii. 2; Eliot's reference to the attempt to pawn them, 27; offered to the City as security for a loan, 76

DALBIER. *See* Dulbier, John
Darnel, Sir Thomas, demands a *habeas corpus*, ii. 182
De Burgh, Hubert, precedent of, quoted by Eliot against Buckingham, ii. 26
De la Pole, Michael, Earl of Suffolk, precedent of, quoted by Eliot against Buckingham, ii. 26
Denbigh, Countess of, accompanies the Queen to Canterbury, i. 184; is proposed as a Lady of the Queen's Bedchamber, 305; insists on the continuance of the English service at Titchfield, 306; is ordered to enter the Queen's household, ii. 95; forebodes her brother's death, 334
— Earl of (William Fielding), Rear-Admiral of the Cadiz fleet, i. 313; is ordered to pursue the Spanish ships, 320; fails in capturing them, 322; captures three Rouen vessels, ii. 97; ordered to convoy provisions to Rochelle, 199; writes mournful letters, 210; is detained at Plymouth, 228; bad condition of his fleet, 231; sails to relieve Rochelle, 270; fails in the undertaking, 271; is ordered to refit his fleet, 273
Denmark, King of. *See* Christian IV.
Devonshire, Earl of (William Cavendish), protests against Buckingham's charge against Digges, ii. 62
Dieppe, Pennington's fleet at, i. 238; Effiat at, 243, 247; second visit of Pennington's fleet to, 247–251
Digges, Sir Dudley, opens the impeachment of Buckingham, ii. 47; imprisoned in the Tower, 59; cleared of offence by the Lords, 61; released, 62; is dismissed from the justiceship of the peace, ii. 78; complains of the military officers, 220; wishes the bill on the liberties of the subject

to be modified, 241; remains silent, 244; adheres at once to the Petition of Right, 250; declares it useless to remain in the House unless grievances can be spoken of, 285
Dispensation for Charles's marriage granted in Rome, i. 152, 153
Dissolution of the Parliament of 1625, i. 297
Doderidge, Sir John, takes part in refusing a *habeas corpus* to the prisoners for the loan, ii. 185
Dorchester, Viscount (Dudley Carleton), receives Contarini's proposal of mediating between England and France, ii. 332; comes to Portsmouth to accompany Buckingham to the King, 336; witnesses the murder, 337
Dorset, Earl of (Edward Sackville), becomes a Privy Councillor, ii. 87; argues that the King may levy money irregularly, 93; demands the imprisonment of the Lords who resist the loan, 106; resists the abandonment of the additional clause to the Petition of Right, 266; threatens Felton with the rack, 347
Dorsetshire, magistrates of, reprimanded for refusing to provide ships for the King's fleet, ii. 85; billeted soldiers turned out of doors in, 199; outrages of soldiers in, 227
Dover, Mansfeld's troops at, i. 124; mutiny at, 126; Charles meets his wife at, 183.
Downs, the, Spanish ships in, i. 82
Drake, Sir John, becomes joint Vice-Admiral of Devon with Sir James Bagg, ii. 100
Du Fargis, Count, prepares a treaty between France and Spain, ii. 33; his treaty signed, 37
Dulbier, John, becomes military adviser to Buckingham, ii. 145; is sent to Germany to levy horse, 194; his commission enquired into by the Commons, 289; ordered not to bring his men to England, 301; directed to remain in the Netherlands, 317
Du Maurier, advises Mansfeld to go to France, i. 55
Dunkirk, ships sailing from, chased by the Dutch, i. 81; they are detained in the Downs, 82; privateers from, 293; Pennington stationed off, 311; ravages of privateers from, 338; attack upon, proposed by Buckingham, 339
Durham, Bishop of. *See* Neile, Richard
Durham House, Blainville's lodgings in, ii. 13; riot at, 141

EAST INDIA COMPANY, the English, opens a trade with Persia, i. 72; takes Ormuz, 73*; claims of the King and Buckingham against, 73; its fleet stayed, 74; is charged with piracy, 75; and obliged to pay 20,000*l.*, 76, its quarrels with the Dutch, 77; hears of the massacre of Amboyna, 78
Edmondes, Sir Thomas, objects to a vote of more than three subsidies, i. 31; asks for supply in the Parliament at Oxford, 270; asks the Commons in 1628 to forget and forgive, ii. 203
Effiat, Marquis of (Antoine de Ruzé) sent as ambassador to England, i. 91; wins over Buckingham, 91; uses Buckingham to overcome the resistance of the King and Prince, 95—100; lays before James a plan for pacifying Germany, 105; asks James to lend ships to be used against Rochelle, 152; prepares to return to France, 235; his negotiation with Nicholas and Pennington at Dieppe, 247; fails to obtain possession of the ships, 250
Eglesham, Dr., writes a book accusing Buckingham of poisoning James I., i. 340
Elbe, the, blockaded by Trevor, ii. 149
Eliot, Sir John, his early life and political opinions, i. 16; his speech on the privileges of Parliament, 17; his ideal view of Parliament, 18; supports a war with Spain, 23, 30; proposes to thank the King and the Prince, 60; explanation of his remaining in Devonshire when Buckingham visited France, 168, 180, note 2; his account of Wentworth's support of Mallory's motion for adjournment, 193; his speech on religion in the Parliament of 1625, 195; his 'Monarchy of Man,' 196; his account of the King's reply to the grant of supply criticised, 202, note 2; denounces Wentworth, 204; his interview with Buckingham, 224; speaks on a pardon to a Jesuit, 257; his description of Carlisle, 259; expresses his doubts about the conduct of the war, 276; but thinks Buckingham

personally innocent, 277; gives an account of the arguments used with Buckingham, 279; speech against Buckingham attributed to him in 1625, never really spoken, 289; his proceedings after the dissolution, ii. 3; demands enquiry into the past in the Parliament of 1626, 4; presides over the investigation into the case of the 'St. Peter,' 8; finds it difficult to discover the truth, 10; counsels the House not to desist from enquiry on account of the King's interference, 24; directly charges Buckingham as the root of evil, 25; quotes the precedents of De Burgh and De la Pole against Buckingham, 26; proposes that subsidies shall be granted in Committee, but that no bill shall be passed, 27; draws up a remonstrance claiming for the Commons the right of enquiry into the offences of ministers, 29; sums up the charges against Buckingham, 51; compares Buckingham to Sejanus, 55; and to the Bishop of Ely, 56; imprisoned in the Tower, 59; charged with things extrajudicial to the House, 63; is released and cleared by the House, 64; refuses to take part in the Star Chamber prosecution of Buckingham, 76; is dismissed from the justiceship of the peace, 78; is deprived of his Vice-Admiralty, 100; is imprisoned for refusing to pay the forced loan, 116; his petition from the Gatehouse, 180; thinks that the impeachment of Buckingham should be renewed, 201; his speech on the liberties of England, 203; compared with Wentworth, 207; produces Anderson's resolution, 216; objects to granting supply for the war, 218; reports an outrage committed by soldiers, 219; objects to a grant of five subsidies, 223; protests against Buckingham's name being associated with the King's, 226; recommends that no vote of supply be taken in a thin House, 229; points out the grievance in the commissions of martial law, 229; objects to the Lords' propositions, 239; wishes the bill on the liberties of the subject to be passed as it stands, 241; his moral excellence, 248; adheres at once to the Petition of Right, 250; his rejoinder to Wentworth's proposal to come to terms with the Lords, 262; his resolution after the first answer to the Petition, 278; his speech on the state of the nation, 279; moves for a remonstrance, 281; his motion adopted, 282; declares that the King has been deceived, 284; is stopped by the Speaker, 285

Epernon, Duke of, seizes the English wine fleet at Bordeaux, ii. 102

Erle, Sir Walter, complains of captures made by the Sallee rovers, and moves that tonnage and poundage shall only be granted for a year, i. 221; demands a *habeas corpus*, ii. 182; complains of the soldiers in Dorsetshire, 227; and of the violation of the subjects' liberties, 244

Espesses, M. d', urges the States General to allow Mansfeld to land in the Netherlands, i. 127

Essex, trained bands of, called out, i. 310; reception of the forced loan in, ii. 104, 113

— Earl of (Robert Devereux), Vice-Admiral of the Cadiz fleet, i. 313; leads the fleet into Cadiz Bay, 317; directs the attack upon Puntal, 319; refuses payment of the forced loan, ii. 106; wishes the Petition of Right to be put to the vote, 259

Excise, proposal to levy, discussed in the Council, ii. 192; idea of, dropped, 195; commission to councillors for the consideration of, 198; commission for considering, cancelled by the King, 301

Exeter, Earl of (William Cecil), assures Buckingham that his success at Rhé is miraculous, ii. 153

FALMOUTH, Pennington at, ii. 168

Felton, John, murders Buckingham, ii. 336; acknowledges his act, 337; story of his preparation for the murder, 339; his popularity, 341; is threatened with the rack, 347; is condemned and executed, 348

Ferdinand II., Emperor, claims to dispose of vacant fiefs in Italy, ii. 316

Fielding, Lord (Basil Fielding), offers to change clothes with Buckingham, ii. 167; is sent to direct his father to return to Rochelle, 272

Finch, Sir John, Speaker in 1628, interrupts Eliot's speech, ii. 285; goes

to inform the King, 286; brings a message adjourning the House, 288
Flanders, coast of, proposal to use the English fleet against, i. 174; proposal for an attack upon, 185, 267; to be kept blockaded, 308
Fleet, the English, orders given for the preparation of, i. 80; directed to be ready for the spring of 1625, 147; preparation of, going on, 151, 172. *See* Cadiz, expedition to
Flushing, Mansfeld's troops at, i. 132
Fontainebleau, the Huguenot deputies at, i. 252; council held at, 253
Forced loan, the, demanded by the King, probably at Apsley's suggestion, ii. 98; levied in Middlesex, 99; success in the five home counties, 104; refusal of the Judges to admit the legality of, 105; growing resistance of the counties to, 106; Privy Councillors sent as commissioners to collect, 112; success or failure of their mission to collect, 113; the gallows threatened to poor men refusing to pay, 114; persons refusing to pay sent into confinement, 139; precedent quoted by Eliot against, 181; amount produced by, 189; release of prisoners in confinement for refusing to pay, 196
Ford, Abbot sent into confinement at, ii. 174
Fort Louis, engagement of Lewis XIII. to pull it down, i. 150; negotiation about its demolition, 252, 352, 357; its demolition indirectly agreed to, 358; its demolition refused, ii. 36; its position checks the commerce of Rochelle, 131
France, changes its policy with respect to Spain, i. 4, 48; views of its Government with respect to Germany and the Valtelline, 52; forms a league for the recovery of the Valtelline, 105. *See* Prize goods, French
Franche Comté, attack upon meditated, i. 55
Frankenthal, its surrender demanded by James, i. 115
Frederick, titular King of Bohemia, proposal that Mansfeld shall nominally serve under him, i. 133
Frederick Henry of Nassau, Count, helps Mansfeld's troops, i. 132; succeeds Maurice as Prince of Orange, 173; his reception of Morton's scheme for an attack upon Flanders, 268; refuses compliance with Buckingham's plan for an attack upon Dunkirk, 339; sends a message to Carleton to order Alleyne to leave the Texel, ii. 150; is informed by Charles of his negotiations with Spain, 318
Free gift, demanded from the counties, ii. 77; general refusal to pay, 84; demanded from the clergy, 198
French marriage treaty, the, i. 86; difficulties arise in, about the English Catholics, 88; solution proposed by La Vieuville, 91; solution proposed by Richelieu, 97; negotiations about, 98, 110; signature of, in France, 111; ratification of, in England, 119; results of, ii. 109
Fryer, Sir Thomas, his conversation with Buckingham before his murder, ii. 336

GENOA, proposed attack upon, i. 147; James asked to lend ships against, 148; French troops join the Duke of Savoy against, 176, 251
George William, Elector of Brandenburg, sends Bellin to Stockholm to engage Sweden in the German war, i. 141
Gerbier, Balthazar, accompanies Buckingham to Paris, ii. 119; treats with Rubens for peace with Spain, 120; returns to London, 121; is sent back to say that Charles will not treat apart from the Dutch, 122; end of his negotiation, 147
Germany, condition of the North of, i. 135
Gertruidenberg, Mansfeld's troops at, i. 132
Giles, Sir Edward, complains of a pardon to a Jesuit, i. 257
Gill, Alexander, his language about the King and the Duke, ii. 343; is sentenced in the Star Chamber, 344
Glanville, John, gives an opinion that Wentworth's election is void, i. 205; prepares a protest at the dissolution of the Parliament of 1625, 296; sent as secretary to the Cadiz expedition, 315; takes part in Buckingham's impeachment, ii. 49; argues before the Lords against the additional clause to the Petition of Right, 264
Gloucestershire, resistance to the forced loan in, ii. 113
Glückstadt, siege of, ii. 269

Gondomar, the Count of, proposed mission of, to England, i. 108; visits France, 240; his part in the Prince's journey to Madrid, ii. 44
Good Friday, the Commons kept sitting on, ii. 223
Gorges, Sir Ferdinando, commands one of the ships lent to the French, i. 236; refuses to deliver up his ship, 254
Goring, Sir George, appointed to go on a mission to France, i. 97; his mission countermanded, 101; informs Buckingham of the state of feeling in England, 157
Grandison, Viscount (Oliver St. John), becomes a member of the Council of War, i. 58; proposal of Heath to produce him in evidence, 295; created Baron Tregoze in the English Peerage, ii. 65
Grey (an English friar), employed to suggest a marriage between Charles and Henrietta Maria, i. 4; is disavowed by Mary de Medici, 5
Grimston, Sir Harbottle, asks for an explanation of the claim of the Crown to commit, ii. 249
Grison Leagues, lose possession of the Valtelline, i. 53
Guiton, Jean, Mayor of Rochelle, proposes to surrender Rochelle, ii. 329, 330
Gustavus Adolphus, King of Sweden, mission of Spens to, i. 4; his view of the way in which the war ought to be carried on, 84; his position in 1624, 138; his plan for carrying on the war in Germany, 139; apprehends the rivalry of Christian IV., 141; makes high demands from James, 142; English proposal that he and Christian IV shall serve under the Elector of Brandenburg, 143; proposes a close Protestant alliance within a larger league, 145; refuses to fight except on his own conditions, 146

HABEAS CORPUS BILL, a, proposed by Noy, and supported by Wentworth, ii. 237; proposed in a different form by Wentworth, 241
Habeas corpus, writ of, demanded by five persons imprisoned for refusing to pay the loan, ii. 182
Hague, the, Congress of, i. 340
Hague, the Treaty of, signed, i. 341; displeasure of Lewis XIII. with, 342
Halberstadt, administrator of. *See* Christian of Brunswick
Hamburgh, ships from, placed under an embargo, ii. 127; Wallenstein passes near, 149; blockaded by Trevor, 149
Hamilton, Marchioness of, proposed as a Lady of the Queen's Bedchamber, i. 305
— Marquis of (James Hamilton), hesitates to approve a war with Spain, i. 8; dissuades Buckingham from sending Bristol to the Tower, 66; objects to Buckingham's support of the French demands, 100; his death, 159
Hampden, John, is called before the Council for refusing payment of the forced loan, ii. 115
—, Sir Edmund, demands a *habeas corpus*, ii. 182
Harsnet, Samuel, Bishop of Norwich, draws up the Lords' propositions on the liberties of the subject, ii. 234; named a member of the Lords' Committee on Imprisonment, 253; wishes that the King may be asked for a better answer to the Petition of Right, 290
Harvey, Lord, member of the Council of War, i. 295
— William, fears that James will not recover, i. 161
Harwich, occupied by the Essex trained bands, i. 310
Havre, French ships at, to be attacked by Pennington, ii. 107
Heath, Sir Robert, promises an answer to the grievances of 1624, i. 195; opposes the limitation of tonnage and poundage, 221; recommends that Coke's demand for supply be dropped, 230; explains the grant of a pardon to a Jesuit, 258; defends Montague as being in the King's service, 260; speaks in defence of Buckingham, 274; replies to Mansell, 295; becomes Attorney-General, 336; defends Buckingham's treatment of the 'St. Peter,' ii. 10; his opinion on the right of the Commons to enquire into the proceedings of the Council of War, 17; delivers charges against Bristol, 43; his part in Buckingham's defence, 67; pleads with the King against the dissolution of Parliament, 72; his argument for the right of the Crown to imprison, 184; argues against the Commons' resolutions on

the liberty of the subject, 226; draws up forms of answer to the Petition of Right, 276
Heiligenhafen, defeat of the Margrave of Baden at, ii. 149
Henrietta Maria, marriage with the Prince of Wales suggested for her, i. 4; possibility of her marriage announced to Parliament, 30; her personal appearance described by Kensington, 50; treaty for her marriage signed, 111; treaty ratified in England, 119; she is expected in England in December, 152; married, 175; lands in England and meets Charles, 183; first matrimonial troubles of, 184; enters London with the King, 184; takes possession of Denmark House, 185; disputes with her husband, 233, 304; her behaviour at Titchfield, 305; difference with Charles about her household, 331, 343; refuses to be crowned by a Protestant bishop, 354; is absent from the coronation, 355; her conduct on the day of the opening of Parliament, 363; speaks in favour of Arundel, ii. 16; her alleged pilgrimage to Tyburn, 90; expulsion of her French attendants, 90; receives a new English household, 95
Herbert, Edward, his part as a manager of Buckingham's impeachment, ii. 48
— Sir Edward, doubts how far the French are ready to carry out James's wishes, i. 51; is recalled from the embassy in France, 52; again expresses doubts of the sincerity of France, 86
Herefordshire, payment of the forced loan in, ii. 113
Hertfordshire, reception of the forced loan in, ii. 106
Heveningham, Sir John, demands a *habeas corpus*, ii. 182
Hippesley, Sir John, urges the payment of Mansfeld's soldiers, i. 126; message sent by, ii. 158
Hobart, Sir Henry, death of, ii. 105
Hoby, Sir Thomas Posthumus, adheres at once to the Petition of Right, ii. 250
Holland, Earl of (Henry Rich), expresses his dissatisfaction with the behaviour of the French Government, i. 110; accompanies Buckingham to the Hague, 338; his mission to France together with Carleton, 344; his interview with Richelieu, 349; progress of his negotiation, 352, 357, 360; is ordered home, ii. 35; is expected with reinforcements at Rhé, 145; delays in his expedition, 154; is delayed at Portsmouth, 155, 156; goes to Plymouth, 197; causes of his failure, 165
Holles, Denzil, his opinion of the expedition to Rhé, ii. 168
Household, the Queen's, Charles wishes to introduce English ladies into, i. 305; Charles informs Blainville that he will take his own course about, 331; fresh instance made by Lewis about, 341; Charles wishes to dismiss the French members of, 343; continued dissatisfaction of Charles with, ii. 88; dismissal of, 90; formed anew of English attendants, 95; difficulties about arranged by Bassompierre, 96; Bassompierre's agreement about, disavowed, 109
Howson, John, Bishop of Oxford, joins Buckeridge and Laud in giving an opinion on Montague's book, i. 262; becomes Bishop of Durham, ii. 314
Huguenots, the, their position in France, i. 150; rebellion of, 151; offers of peace made to, 180; peace agreed upon with, 245, 252, 253; breach of peace with, 303; Buckingham ordered to mediate peace for, 330; fresh negotiations about, 352, 357; terms of peace for, 358; Charles dissatisfied with the terms granted to, 360
Hyde, Nicholas, draws up Buckingham's defence, ii. 67; appointed Chief Justice of the King's Bench, 105; takes part in refusing a *habeas corpus* to the prisoners for the loan, 185

IMPOSITIONS, the King's right to levy, not attacked in the Parliament of 1624, i. 68; alleged speech by Eliot on, 68, note 1; questioned by Phelips in 1625, 221
Ingham, Edward, carries a message from Pembroke to Pennington, i. 216, note 3
Inojosa, the Marquis of, brings charges against Buckingham, i. 19, 39, 60; is detained in England by James, 61; sent away from England, 80; complained of by James, 81; acquitted in Spain, 108. *See* Spanish ambassadors
Ireland, proposed reinforcements for, i. 25, 26, 32, 82
Isabella, the Infanta, replies to James's demand for the surrender of Frankenthal, i. 115; directs Rubens how

to treat with Gerbier, ii. 120; complains of her want of money, 121; receives Carlisle at an audience, 319

JAMES I., King of England, his feeling about the proposed war with Spain, i. 3; is favourable to a French alliance, 5; refuses to give full information to the Commissioners for Spanish Affairs, 7; is reported to be tired of Buckingham, 10; proposes to send Coke and Sandys to Ireland, 10; speech of, in opening Parliament, 12; receives complaints against Buckingham from the Spanish ambassadors, 19; objects to the Commons' petition for a breach with Spain, 23; is overborne by Buckingham, 24; difference between his views and those of the Commons, 25; expresses his dissatisfaction with the address of Parliament, 27; agrees to consent to war with Spain, 29; announces the dissolution of the treaties with Spain, 32; his engagement about the use of the subsidies, 33; promises an autumn session, 34; denounces the treaties to the Spanish ambassadors, and receives the Dutch ambassadors, 37; changes his mind about the treaties, 39; listens to the Spanish charges against Buckingham, 40; recalls the despatch denouncing the Spanish treaties, 41; sends it off, 44; receives Mansfeld, 56; offers to join France in supporting Mansfeld, 57; replies to the Recusancy petition, 58; receives Inojosa's charges against Buckingham, 60; blames Buckingham and the Prince for attacking Middlesex, 65; is persuaded to place Bristol in confinement, 67; prorogues Parliament and criticises the bills presented to him, 69; demands money from the East India Company for Buckingham, 73; and also for himself, 75; demands justice for the massacre of Amboyna, 79; complains of Inojosa to Philip, 81; allows the privileges of neutrality to the Spanish ships in the Downs, 82; carries out the programme of the Commons, 82; determines that there shall be no stipulation in the marriage treaty in favour of the Catholics, 87; offers to write a letter about them, 92; rejects the French demand of an article, 95; offers to write a satisfactory letter instead, 96; agrees to alter the letter, 101; declares that he cannot sign an article, 102; receives offers from France about Mansfeld's armament, 106; finds that Lewis will not give a satisfactory engagement about Mansfeld, 107; thinks it possible to invade the Palatinate without a war with Spain, 104; agrees to a private engagement with France about the Catholics, 110; objects to the employment of Mansfeld for the relief of Breda, 118: ratifies the marriage treaty, 119; insists that Mansfeld shall land in France, 129; orders Mansfeld's colonels to refuse to follow him to Breda, 130; refuses to alter his resolution, 133; shrinks from the expense of acceding to the demands of Gustavus, 143; proposes to ally himself with Denmark, 144; but expects Gustavus to join the alliance, 145; considers the Duke of Savoy's proposal for an attack upon Genoa, 147; agrees to lend ships to be used against Rochelle, 152; rejects further demands for concessions to the Catholics, 154; his last illness, 159; dies, 162; his funeral, 163

Japanese soldiers at Amboyna, i. 77

Jask, settlement of the East India Company at, i. 72

Jewels. *See* Crown jewels

Joachimi, Albert, learns that Buckingham is treating with Spain, ii. 121

John George, Elector of Saxony, expresses his contempt of France, i. 99; refuses to take part in a combination against the Emperor, 138

Jones, William, Justice of the King's Bench, asks Heath how the prisoners for the loan are to be delivered, ii. 184; takes part in refusing them a *habeas corpus*, 185

Jonson, Ben, supposed to have written verses in praise of Felton, ii. 342

Judges, the, refusal of, to admit the legality of the forced loan, ii. 105; consulted on the meaning of the Petition of Right, 274

Justices of the peace, dismissal of, ii. 78

Jutland, overrun by the Imperialists, ii. 268

KENSINGTON, Viscount (Henry Rich), his mission to France, i. 5, 48; his view of the French alliance,

50; returns to England to give an account of the state of the negotiation, 91; takes back the King's resolution to France, 92; adopts Richelieu's views, 98; created Earl of Holland, 102. *See* Holland, Earl of
Killigrew, Sir Henry, recommends that the question of supply be not put, i. 294
King's Bench, Court of, appealed to for a *habeas corpus* by the prisoners for the loan, ii. 182; argument of the Attorney-General before, 184; judgment of, 185
Kirton, Edward, says that the enemies of the Commonwealth have led the King astray, ii. 286
Krempe, siege of, ii. 269

LAFUENTE, Diego de, his papers taken from him on his mission to England, i. 36
La Haye sent to Denmark and Sweden, i. 143
Lambe, Dr., unpopularity of, ii. 301; murder of, 302
La Prée, fort of, battered by Buckingham, ii. 131; the French shelter themselves by, 160; discussion on Buckingham's conduct in leaving it untaken, 160, note 1; threatening position of the French at, 161
Landguard Fort, repairs ordered for, i. 310
Laud, William, Bishop of St. David's, his theological position, i 215; his O. and P. list, 220; joins Buckeridge and Howson in approving of Montague's books, 262; his view of the functions of Convocation, 263; his sermon at the opening of the Parliament of 1626, ii. 6; takes part in the conference about Montague's book, 7; teaches that the King is irresponsible, 47; prepares a speech for the King, 57; looks over Buckingham's defence, 67; his sermon at the beginning of the Parliament of 1625, 171; his political views, 172; has a promise of the Bishopric of London and the Archbishopric of Canterbury, 174; objects to Manwaring's sermons, 177; advocates an excise, 193; preaches at the opening of Parliament, 200; objects to the Lords' propositions on the liberties of the subject, 234; part taken by him in the licensing of Manwaring's sermons, 298; his favour with the King complained of by the Commons, 299; becomes Bishop of London, 314; begs the remission of Gill's sentence, 344
Lauenburg, junction of Wallenstein and Tilly at, ii. 148
La Vieuville, Marquis of, his ministry and anti-Spanish policy, i. 48; tries to get over the difficulties of the French marriage, 89; is dismissed, 92
Legg, William, captured by Sallee pirates, i. 293
Lennox, Duke of (Matthew Stuart), hesitates to approve of a breach with Spain, i. 8; dies, 12; his monument, ii. 345
Lesdiguières, Marshal (Constable of France), prepares to attack Genoa, i. 148; advocates peace with the Huguenots, 251
Lewis XIII., King of France, prepares to join in opposition against Spain, i. 48; makes overtures to the Elector of Bavaria, 52; his anxiety about the Valtelline, 53; insists upon an engagement for the English Catholics, 88; dismisses La Vieuville, 92; offers to support Mansfeld, 99; offers aid to Mansfeld, 106; refuses to give a written promise that Mansfeld shall pass through France, 107; offers a verbal promise to support Mansfeld, 110; promises that he may land in France, 115; sends Ville-aux-clercs to England, 117; urges James to allow Mansfeld to succour Breda, 122; prohibits Mansfeld from landing in France, 129; refuses to support the Pope in making fresh demands for the English Catholics, 154; sends a messenger urging the Huguenots to treat for peace, 180; accompanies his sister to Compiègne, 182; grants peace to the Huguenots, and prepares to make war upon Spain, 253; makes proposals to Charles through Blainville, 327; objects to Buckingham's visiting France, 329, 341; demands the fulfilment of the marriage treaty, 342; is displeased with the Treaty of the Hague, 349; terms offered by him to the Huguenots, 352; objects to his sister's coronation by a Protestant bishop, 354; attempts to conciliate Charles, ii. 13; withdraws his troops from before Rochelle, 33; offers to recall Blainville, 35; refuses to listen to Carleton's explanation of the dis-

missal of the Queen's attendants, 92; disavows Bassompierre, 109; adopts Richelieu's policy of toleration, 354.

Ley, Lord (James Ley), becomes Lord Treasurer, i. 157; appointed a member of the Committee for Foreign Affairs, 172; his financial statement at Oxford, 285; suggests that money may be raised on the security of prize goods, 346; created Earl of Marlborough, 357. *See* Marlborough, Earl of

Liberties of the subject, bill on the, proposed by Wentworth, ii. 224; provisions of, 240, note 1; debate on in the Commons, 241

Liberties of the subject, the Commons' resolutions on the, ii. 217, 219; carried up to the Lords, 226; discussed in the House of Lords, 232; dropped by the Commons, 239

Liberties of the subject, the Lords' propositions on the, ii. 234

Lincoln, Earl of (Theophilus Clinton), resists the forced loan, ii. 106; is sent to the Tower, ii. 114; takes his place in the Parliament of 1628, 202

Lincolnshire, resistance to the forced loan in, ii. 113, 114

Lindsey, Earl of (Robert Bertie), attempts to relieve Rochelle, ii. 349; is ordered by the King to persevere, 353

Littleton, Edward, carries up the Commons' resolutions to the Lords, ii. 226; says that the subject will lose by the mere confirmation of the statutes, 249; adheres at once to the Petition of Right, 250

Loan, the forced. *See* Forced loan

Loix, Isle of, retreat of the English from Rhé to, ii. 161

London, city of. *See* City of London

Lords, the House of, condemns the treaties with Spain, i. 20; discusses James's demand for money, 26; sentences Middlesex, 64; orders that no Peer shall hold more than two proxies, ii. 11; objects to Arundel's imprisonment, 38; supports Bristol's demand for his writ, 41; charge against Bristol heard by, 42; Bristol's charge against Buckingham heard by, 44; Buckingham impeached before, 46; insists on Arundel's liberation, 58; enquires into the language of Digges, 61; clears him of offence, 62; fears lest Charles means to pack the House, 65; objects to the exclusion of some of its members, 202; inclines to the King's side on the Commons' resolutions, 230; consults the Judges, 231; hears fresh argument, and opens a debate on the resolutions, 232; draws up counter-propositions, 234; appoints a Committee to examine the question of imprisonment, 252; debate in, on the imprisonment clause of the Petition of Right, 254; asks the Commons to meet some of its members in Committee, 265; declares its readiness to defend the prerogative, 268; asks the King for a clear answer to the Petition, 290

Lorkin, Thomas, agent in France, i. 240

Lorne, Lord (Archibald Campbell), design of marrying him to Elizabeth Stuart, i. 15

Lorraine, Duke of, Montague's mission to, ii. 126; offers no help against France, 137

MALLORY, William, proposes an adjournment at the opening of the Parliament of 1625, i. 192

Maltravers, Lord, marriage of, ii. 15

Manchester, Earl of (Henry Montague), proposes an amendment in the Lords' address about Arundel, ii. 58; named a member of the Lords' Committee upon Imprisonment, 253; becomes Lord Privy Seal, 320

Mandeville, Viscount (Henry Montague), created Earl of Manchester, i. 357. *See* Manchester, Earl of

Mansell, Sir Robert, appointed a member of the Council of War, i. 58; asked to give evidence against Buckingham, 289; explains the part taken by him in the Council of War, 292; answered by Heath, 295; reprimanded by the Council, 302

Mansfeld, Count Ernest of, in Holland and France, i. 55; his visit to England, 56; returns to France, 57; receives hopes of support from France, 99; money refused to him by the Council of War, 104; returns to England, 105; proposes to land English troops in France, 106; goes to Holland, 107; support promised to him by France, 110; two months' pay found for him, 112; returns to England, 112; prospects of his proposed expedition, 113; permission given to him to land in France, 115; proposes to use the English troops for the relief of Breda, 117; support given by France

MAN

to this project, 117, 122; his men at Dover, 124; miserable condition of his force, 125; mutiny in his army, 126; wishes to land in the Netherlands, 127; declares that he will land at Flushing, 128; is ordered to go to Calais, 129; takes his men to Flushing, 131; sickness and mortality amongst them, 132, 134; deplorable condition of his troops, 186; arrangements to send him into Germany, 328; leads an army beyond the Elbe, ii. 93; is defeated at the Bridge of Dessau, 94; dies, 124

Mantua, Duke of, war of succession caused by his death, ii. 316

Manwaring, Roger, his sermons on Religion and Allegiance, ii. 179; they are licensed by Montaigne, 177; impeached by the Commons, 294; becomes rector of Stanford Rivers, 315

Marescot, M., his mission to Germany, i. 99

Marlborough, Earl of (James Ley), finds it difficult to supply Buckingham at Rhé, ii. 138, 140; becomes President of the Council, 320

Marriage treaty. *See* French marriage treaty

Marten, Sir Henry, his speech about young ambassadors, i. 259; argues for a grant of supply, 294; refuses to support the sale of French prize goods, 347; orders the restitution of the 'St. Peter,' 351; is consulted by Buckingham about its detention, ii. 9; his parable about the additional clause to the Petition of Right, 260; argues before the Lords against the clause, 264

Martial law, discussed in the House of Commons, ii. 228; complaint against, included in the Petition of Right, 251

Mary de Medici wishes her daughter to marry Charles, i. 4; disavows Grey, 5; her reception of Kensington, 49; listens to Carlisle and Kensington, 94; Buckingham's conversation with, 182

Masham, Sir William, imprisoned for refusing to act on the commission for the loan, ii. 105

Mason, Captain, his house occupied by Buckingham, ii. 335

Maurice, Prince of Orange, his pride in the fortifications of Breda, i. 117; death of, 173

Maximilian, Elector of Bavaria, his overtures to James, i. 10

MON

May, Sir Humphrey, appointed a Privy Councillor, i. 168; argues that Montague is not guilty of contempt of the House, 219; determines to remonstrate with Buckingham on his desire to obtain more supply, 224; replies to Seymour in defence of the King's foreign policy, 270; informs Buckingham that it is difficult to find money for him, ii. 154; asks the Commons in 1628 to forget and forgive, 203; asks leave to go out of the House whilst Eliot is speaking, 279

Maynard, Lord (William Maynard), moves that the Lords declare in favour of the prerogative, ii. 258

— Sir John, said to have forged a letter about the Jesuits at Clerkenwell, ii. 209, note 1

Mende, Bishop of, is informed of Charles's intention of introducing English ladies into the Queen's household, i. 348; objects to the dismissal of the Queen's attendants, ii. 90

Middlesex, county of, levy of the forced loan in, ii. 99

— Earl of (Lionel Cranfield), opposed to war with Spain, i. 8; his opposition to Buckingham, 62; advises the Prince to marry the Infanta, 63; impeached, 64; sentenced, 65; his fine reduced, 70; his name removed from the list of Privy Councillors, 168

Mildmay, Sir Henry, asks the Commons to vote money for the fleet, i. 276; recommends the Commons to consult the King, ii. 208

Monopoly Act, the, i. 67

Montague, Richard, meets with a Roman Catholic pamphlet, i. 205; writes 'A New Gag for an Old Goose,' 206; his book referred to Abbot by the Commons, 208; applies to James, and writes '*Appello Cæsarem*,' 209; his books referred to a Committee of the Commons, 210; report of the Committee against him, 216; debate in the House upon the report, 218; is committed to the sergeant-at-arms, but released on bond, 219; appointed King's chaplain, 231; is too ill to appear at the Oxford session, 259, 260; defended by Heath, 260; opinion pronounced on his book by three bishops, 262; his book discussed at a conference, ii. 7; and left to the

judgment of Parliament, 8; Pym's report against, 74; made Bishop of Chichester, 314
Montague, Walter, sent to Lorraine and Savoy, ii. 126, 137; his negotiation at Turin, 147; seized by the French on his return, 137; accompanies Lindsey to negotiate at Rochelle, 351; returns to England with Richelieu's terms, 352
Montaigne, George (Bishop of London), supports Buckingham's candidature for the Cambridge Chancellorship, ii. 66; licenses Sibthorpe's sermon, 175; licenses Manwaring's sermons, 177; becomes Bishop of Durham and then Archbishop of York, 314
Montferrat, claim of the Duke of Savoy to the territory of, ii. 316
Montgomery, Earl of (Philip Herbert), becomes Lord Chamberlain, ii. 87
Montpellier, the treaty of, i. 150
Morgan, Sir Charles, sent with four regiments to help the King of Denmark, ii. 124; money paid for, 140; insubordination of his men, 148; his want of money, 149; surrenders Stade, 269; intention of sending him back to help the King of Denmark, 317
More, Sir George, objects to consult the Lords about subsidies, i. 269
Morton, Sir Albertus, becomes Secretary of State, i. 156; accompanies Buckingham to Paris, 180; is sent on a mission to the Hague, 185; his proposal rejected, 267; returns and dies, 311
Morton, Thomas, Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry, takes part in the conference on Montague's book, ii. 7
Mountjoy, Lord, anecdote of, i. 270

NAVY, Commission of enquiry into the, ii. 112
Neile, Richard, Bishop of Durham, stops a tumult at Durham House, ii. 14; his favour with the King complained of by the Commons, 299; translated to Winchester, 314
Netherlands, United Provinces of the, asked to send commissioners to England, i. 4; reception of the commissioners by James, 37; negotiations opened with them, 58; treaty with, for the loan of 6,000 men, 80; enter into a league with France, 117; lend money for the support of Mansfeld's troops, 133; asked for a loan of ships against Genoa, 148; agree to lend the ships against Rochelle, 151; asked to join England in a naval attack upon Spain, 173, 185; consent to send ships and enter into the Treaty of Southampton, 307; engage to supply money to the King of Denmark, 341; refuse to take offence at Trevor's breach of neutrality, ii. 150; promise to investigate the truth about the massacre of Amboyna, 329
Nethersole, Sir Francis, describes the policy of James, i. 82; his argument on imprisonment without cause shown, ii. 213; thinks that good will come of Buckingham's murder, 342
Nevers, Duke of, his claim to the Duchy of Mantua, ii. 316
'New Gag for an Old Goose,' written by Montague, i. 206
Nicholas, Edward, sent to Dieppe to prevent the surrender of English ships to the French, i. 243; his instructions, 245; prevents the delivery of the ships, 247; his subsequent account of the transaction, 248, note 5
North, Lord (Dudley North), protests against Buckingham's charge against Digges, ii. 62; asks whether the Petition of Right needs an additional clause, 259
Northampton, Earl of (William Compton), demands ship money in Warwickshire, ii. 198; advocates the Petition of Right, 267
Northamptonshire, resistance to the forced loan in, ii. 113
Norton, Sir Daniel, the King's visit to his house at Southwick, ii. 331
Nottingham, Earl of (Charles Howard), death of, i. 159; his sale of the Admiralty made a matter of charge against Buckingham, ii. 48
Noy, William, argues on behalf of the five prisoners for the loan, ii. 182; suggests a *Habeas Corpus* Bill, 237; remains silent, 244

OGLE, Sir John, appointed a member of the Council of War, i. 58; sent to investigate the state of Mansfeld's troops, 129
Oleron, proposal to send Pennington to, i. 350
Olivares, Count of, contrasted with Richelieu, i. 121; draws up a treaty with France in concert with Du

Fargis, ii. 33; enters into an engagement with France against England, 123; mission of Porter to come to an understanding with, 318
Olivares, the Countess of, her present to Charles, i. 36
Orange, Prince of. *See* Maurice and Frederick Henry
Ormuz, taken from the Portuguese by the East India Company, i. 72
Osnabrück, Bishopric of, comes into Catholic hands, i. 137
Oxford, the houses adjourned to, i. 231
— city of, pays the forced loan readily, ii. 112
— Earl of (Robert de Vere), released from the Tower, i. 4
— University of, pays the forced loan readily, ii. 112

PAGET, Lord (William Paget), named a member of the Lords' Committee on Imprisonment, ii. 253; asks that the Judges may be consulted about the meaning of sovereign power, 259
Palatinate, the, offers of Spain about, i. 5; James's feelings about, 24, 27; objection of the Commons to an invasion of, 30; French policy about, 53; Mansfeld's offers for the recovery of, 56; offers of the French about, 110; Buckingham's intention of sending Mansfeld to, 130; Gustavus Adolphus proposes to invade, 141; Mansfeld unable to reach, 186; Alford explains that Parliament is not bound to recover, 274; expectations of recovering entertained by Charles, ii. 316
Palmes, Sir Guy, made sheriff to exclude him from Parliament, i. 337
Parliament of 1624, issue of writs for, i. 4; elections for, 11; opened, 12; asks the King to declare the negotiations with Spain at an end, 26; prorogation of, 69; again prorogued, 103
— — 1625 meets, i. 187; adjourned to Oxford, 231; meets again at Oxford, 257; dissolution of, 297
— — 1626, opening of, ii. 1; dissolution of, 72
— — 1628, writs issued for, ii. 196; opening of, 200; proposed dissolution of, 252; prorogation of, 309
— — Rouen orders reprisals for the seizure of the 'St. Peter,' ii. 9; orders a sequestration of English goods, 97
Pembroke, Earl of (William Herbert), opposes Buckingham, i. 8; is reconciled to him, 9; exculpates Buckingham, 19; dissuades Buckingham from sending Bristol to the Tower, 66; objects to Buckingham's support of the French demands, 100; detained by James in his last illness, 161; appointed a member of the Committee for Foreign Affairs, 172; takes part in the intrigue about the ships lent to France, 246; his probable connection with the opposition, 282; Charles's displeasure, 333; his reconciliation with Buckingham, 334; asks the Commons to support the Government, ii. 12; declares that the ships lent to the French were to have been used against Genoa, 30; his testimony demanded by Bristol, 43; gives evidence, 45; becomes Lord Steward, 87; moves for a Committee on the Commons' resolutions, 234
Pennington, Captain, appointed to command the English ships lent for service against Rochelle, i. 178; informed that he is not to fight against the French Protestants, 237; takes the ships to Dieppe, 238; brings them back to England, 239; ordered back to Dieppe, 241; directed by Buckingham to surrender the ships, 243; expresses his readiness to obey orders, but wishes to resign his command, 244; is directed to get up a mutiny on board his ship, 246; returns to Dieppe, and confers with Effiat, 247; is warned by Nicholas, 248; refuses to deliver the ships, 250; is carried back to England by his crew, 251; receives fresh orders and delivers up the ships, 254; his return to England, 292; ordered to protect Harwich, 311; directed to relieve Rochelle, 350; is sent against French ships at Havre, ii. 107; finds the ships there, 108; mutiny in his fleet, 111; captures French merchantmen, 118
Persia, the Shah of, incites the English to besiege Ormuz, i. 73
Petition of Right, the, proposed by Coke, ii. 250; brought in by Selden, 251; carried up to the Lords, 252; receives its first answer from the King, 277; receives the Royal assent, 291; its meaning and importance, 293; tonnage and poundage said by the Commons to be included in, 307; the King's comment upon, 308

PHE

Phelips, Sir Robert, defends Buckingham in the House of Commons, i. 19; approves of Rudyerd's proposal, 23; supports Mallory's motion for an adjournment in the Parliament of 1625, 193; his speech on Seymour's motion for supply, 199; his amendment for two subsidies carried, 200; brings up the question of impositions, 221; objects to favours being shown to the Catholics, 258; objects to the King's servants being irresponsible, 261; his great speech on 'Want of Counsel,' 271; approves Sir N. Rich's proposal, 278; puts the question of confidence in Buckingham, 288; refuses to advise a petition against dissolution at Oxford, 296; recommends the House not to say anything in defence of the speakers, 297; his leadership, 298; made sheriff to exclude him from Parliament, 337; is dismissed from the justiceship of the peace, ii. 78; thinks that Buckingham should not be impeached a second time, 201; complains that the Judges can expound the law as they please, 211; finds fault with the deputy-lieutenants, 220; doubts whether an army can be maintained without pressing men, 222; is placed on the committee for drawing up the bill on the liberties of the subject, 239; adheres at once to the Petition of Right, 250; moves the rejection of the Lords' proposal of a joint committee, 266; recommends the Commons to go home, 284; desires a modification of the blame of Buckingham in the remonstrance, 299, note 1

Philip IV., King of Spain, his offer about the Palatinate, i. 5; his letters prove that he wished to help France against England, ii. 123

Plague, breaks out in London, i. 189; its ravages, 222

Plate, the King's, sold, ii. 87

Plymouth, state of the troops quartered at, i. 312; visit of the King and Buckingham to, 314; sailing of the fleet from, 316; disorders amongst the sailors at, ii. 188; troops ordered to rendezvous at, 155

Porter, Endymion, interrogatories put by Bristol to, ii. 45; mission of, to Spain, 318

Portsmouth, poor persons refusing to pay to the loan sent to, ii. 104; preparations for the expedition to Rhé

PYM

at, 127; arrival of the King and Buckingham at, 128; Buckingham pays the soldiers and sailors at, 188

Portuguese in the East, i. 72

Preston, Dr., takes part in the conference on Montague's book, i. 7

Privy Council, consulted about the French marriage treaty, i. 101; its rearrangement by Charles, 168; its Committee for Foreign Affairs, 171; discussion in, on the treatment of the Catholics, 282; agrees to the sending out of a fleet and issuing Privy seals, 304; orders the delivery of the 'St. Peter' of Havre de Grace, 348; reprimands the Dorsetshire magistrates for objecting to find troops for the King's service, ii. 86; threatens the City of London, 87; orders the seizure of French ships, 103; members of, sent to collect the forced loan, 112; orders reinforcements for Buckingham at Rhé, 140, 141; discussion in, on ways and means, 192; discusses various plans for raising money, 195; agrees on the answer to be given to the Petition of Right, 277

Privy seals, proposal for issuing, referred to the Council, i. 304; again suggested, and withdrawn, ii. 196

Prize goods, French, controversy about, i. 344; orders given for the sale of, 346; the sale of, stopped, on Blainville's remonstrance, 347; reprisals in France for their detention, 348; sale of, 351; attempts to come to an understanding about, ii. 12; fresh seizures of, 36; their liberation postponed, 101

Prize law, commission to enquire into, ii. 87; its difficulties discussed by Bassompierre, 97

Proclamation for the peace of the Church, ii. 74

Propositions of the Lords on the liberties of the subject, ii. 234

Proxies, order of the House of Lords that no Peer shall hold more than two, ii. 11

Puerto de Santa Maria. *See* St. Mary Port

Puntal, Fort, attack upon, i. 318; surrender of, 320; abandonment of, 323

Pye, Sir Robert, informs Buckingham of the difficulty of getting money, ii. 153

Pym, John, draws up a petition on religion, i. 196; moves that a committee be appointed to consider the

state of religion, ii. 2; takes part in Buckingham's impeachment, 50; attempts to quiet the House on the imprisonment of Eliot and Digges, 59; reports charges against Montague, 74; is placed on the committee for drawing up the bill on the liberties of the subject, 239; asks that the King may explain his meaning, 249; adheres at once to the Petition of Right, 250; says that he does not understand the meaning of sovereign power, 257; carries up Manwaring's impeachment, 294; his declaration of principle, 295.

RECUSANTS. *See* Catholics

Remonstrance of the Commons in 1628, proposed by Eliot, ii. 281; attacked by the King, 282; debate on, interrupted by the King, 288; proceeded with by the Commons, 289; put into its final shape, 298; presented to the King and rejected by him, 303

Rhé, Isle of, proposal to send Pennington to, i. 350; preparations for the expedition to, ii. 112, 119, 127; sailing of the expedition to, 130; arrival of the expedition at, 131; landing of Buckingham at, 132; reinforcements needed at, 136, 137, 138; arrival of Becher at, 141; landing of the French in, 159; retreat of Buckingham from, 161

Resolutions of the Commons. *See* Liberties of the subject, the Commons' resolutions on

Rich, Sir Nathaniel, lays down terms of accommodation between Buckingham and the Commons, i. 277; asks that Buckingham may be imprisoned, ii. 58; compares the King to a debtor, 249; doubts whether the King can be trusted, 251; moves that the Lords be asked to join in the Remonstrance, 285

Richardson, Sir Thomas, appointed Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, ii. 106

Richelieu, Cardinal, consulted by Mary de Medici, i. 49; named as a commissioner for treating of the Prince of Wales's marriage, 87; becomes chief minister, and demands an article for the English Catholics, 93; refuses to accept a letter instead of an article, 96-99; his plans, 105; gives assurances about the Palatinate, 115; comparison between his policy and that of Olivares, 127; his views about Rochelle, 150; asks England and the Netherlands for ships to be used against Rochelle, 151; compels the Pope to grant a dispensation for the marriage, 153; supports James in rejecting the Pope's further demands, 154; assures Lorkin that peace will be granted to the Huguenots, 240; supports the Huguenot deputies, 252; makes overtures to Buckingham, 343; interview of Holland and Carleton with, 349; demands concessions from the Huguenots, 352; brings about an agreement with the Huguenots, 357; offers to join Charles in the war in Germany, 359; attempts to keep on friendly terms with England, ii. 12; finds difficulty in resisting the influence of the Spanish party in France, 34; abandons the English alliance, 37; wishes to strengthen France at sea, 107; is believed by Charles to have sold himself to the Pope, 117; discontent of the French aristocracy with, 126; seizes Walter Montague, 187; receives a proposal for the surrender of Rochelle, 329; declares in favour of toleration, 330; terms offered by him to Walter Montague at Rochelle, 351; his terms rejected by Charles, 352; receives the surrender of the city, 354

Robartes, Lord (Richard Robartes), charge against Buckingham of selling a peerage to, ii. 50, 51, note 1

Rochelle, commerce of, restrained by Fort Louis, i. 150; ships demanded from England and the Netherlands against, 151; seizure of English vessels at, 293; peace broken by Toiras at, 303; relief of, prepared by Pennington and Soubise, 350; attacking force withdrawn from before, ii. 33; inhabitants of, appeal to Charles for aid, 36; determination of Buckingham to defend, 127; Buckingham instructed to offer aid to, 129; refusal of the inhabitants to join forces with him, 134; establishment of Angoulême's army near, 135; threatened by Angoulême, 137; asks help from Buckingham, 138; implores him to remain at St. Martin's, 161; strict blockade of, 158; attempt of Denbigh to relieve, 270; failure of the

attempt, 271; Denbigh ordered to return to, 272; continued resistance of, 329; misery at, 348; attempt of Lindsey to relieve, 349; failure of the attempt to relieve, 350; Charles orders Lindsey to renew the attempt, 353; surrender of, 354.

Rochelle, the English ships lent for service against, agreement for them approved by Buckingham and James, i. 152; Buckingham wishes them not to be used against the Protestants, 178; prepared for sea, 236; discrepancy between the orders given for their employment, 237; their arrival at Dieppe, 238; return to England, 239; are ordered back to Dieppe, 241; employment of Nicholas to prevent the surrender, 243; message of Pembroke about, 246; return to Dieppe, 247; the crews refuse to surrender them, 250; all except one are finally given up, 254; their delivery known in England, 292; Buckingham ordered to demand their restoration, 330; Blainville announces that, with the exception of the 'Vanguard,' they will not be restored, 332; Richelieu makes the same statement about them, 349; restoration of, offered by France, 359; orders given for the restoration of, ii. 13; the true story about, told by Buckingham, 31; reference of Eliot to, 52

Rodney, Sir Edward, defends the deputy-lieutenants, ii. 220

Rohan, the Duke of, begins civil war in France, i. 151; offers to head an insurrection in Languedoc, ii. 127, 137; rises in insurrection, 146; fails to make head against the King's forces, 329

Rota, Francesco della, his negotiation in England, i. 10

Rouen, Parliament of. *See* Parliament of Rouen

Rubens, Peter Paul, treats with Gerbier for a peace between England and Spain, ii. 120; end of his negotiation, 147

Rudyerd, Sir Benjamin, opens the debate in the Commons on the Spanish treaties, i. 20; proposes four objects of expenditure, 21, 26; asks for subsidies, 31; begs the House in the Parliament of 1625 to avoid contention, 194; his speech on Seymour's motion for supply, 199; expresses satisfaction at the making the opposition leaders sheriffs, 338; moves for a committee on religious matters, ii. 2; adjures the Commons to union with the King in the crisis of Parliaments, 205

Rusdorf, John Joachim, his opinion of James and Charles, i. 299; urges Charles to assist the King of Denmark, 307

ST. ALBAN, Viscount. *See* Bacon, Francis

St. Georges, Madame de, her precedence disputed, i. 184

'St. John,' the, brought to Falmouth by Soubise, i. 331; its restitution demanded by France, 331, 349

St. Leger, Sir William, sent to investigate the state of Mansfeld's troops, i. 129; protests against delay in entering Cadiz harbour, 319

St. Martin's, Buckingham anchors off, ii. 131; leads his men to, 133; commencement of the siege of, 135; siege of converted into a blockade, i. 136; difficulties of the siege of, 142; proposed surrender of, 143; relief of, 144; resolution taken to continue the siege, 145; bad condition of the besiegers, 159; raising of the siege of, 161

St. Mary Port, proposal to land at, i. 317

'St. Peter' of Havre de Grace, the, taken by Argall, i. 314; Order in Council for its delivery, 348; order in the Admiralty Court for its restoration, 351; second detention of, 352; case of, investigated by a Committee of the Commons, ii. 8; set free by Buckingham, 9; its detention voted by the Commons not to be a grievance, 11; charge about, replaced on the list of grievances, 33

Salisbury, the King's visit to, i. 327

— Earl of (William Cecil), becomes a Privy Councillor, ii. 87

Sallee rovers, depredations of, i. 221, 293

Sandys, Sir Edwin, proposal to send him to Ireland, i. 10; carries up charges against Middlesex, 64; joins Pym in drawing up a petition on religion, 196; argues that Montague is not guilty of contempt of the House, 219

San Lucar, proposal to attack, i. 317

San Salvador, taken by the Dutch, i. 118

Savile, Sir John, questions Wentworth's seat for Yorkshire, i. 203; his rivalry with Wentworth, ii. 79; urges on the forced loan in Yorkshire,

116; (misprinted Suckling) speaks against maintaining an army at home 193; his connection with the Northern Recusancy Commission, 299
Savoy, Duke of. *See* Charles Emmanuel.
Saxony, Elector of. *See* John George
Saye and Sele, Lord (William Fiennes), makes a motion about Bristol's writ, ii. 41; explains the meaning of the Lords' address about Arundel, 58; protests against Buckingham's charge against Digges, 62; resists the forced loan, 106; advocates the opinion that the King cannot commit without cause shown, 232; moves that the Judges be consulted, 233; objects to Buckingham's interpretation of Arundel and Weston's clause, 257; opposes the clause, 259
Scaglia, the Abbot of, Savoyard ambassador in England, ii. 318
Scheldt, the opening of, demanded by Spain, ii. 120
Schleswig, overrun by the Imperialists, ii. 268
Schomberg, Marshal, lands on the Isle of Rhé, ii. 161
Scilly Isles, the English vessels seized by pirates near, i. 221
Selden, John, argues that the House may proceed against Buckingham upon common fame, ii. 32; his part in Buckingham's impeachment, 48; argues on behalf of the five prisoners for the loan, 182; disapproves of repeating the impeachment of Buckingham, 201; questions the propriety of pressing men, 221; carries up the Commons' resolutions to the Lords, 226; accused of having razed a record, 230; attacks the Lords' propositions on the liberties of the subject, 237; brings in the Petition of Right, 251; moves that Buckingham may be again impeached, 287
Seymour, Sir Francis, objects to a war in the Palatinate, i. 30; moves to ask Charles to execute the laws against the Catholics, 194; moves in the Parliament of 1625 for a small supply, 198; refuses to attack Williams, 258; attacks the King's foreign policy, 269; complains of malpractices at Court, 289; attacks Buckingham by name, 293; made sheriff to exclude him from Parliament, 337; dismissed from the justiceship of the peace, ii. 78; speaks on a motion for supply, 203; wishes the bill on the liberties of

the subject to be modified, 241; speaks in favour of the bill, 244; reminds Sir J. Coke that he had acknowledged that the laws had been violated, 246; adheres at once to the Petition of Right, 250; supports Wentworth's proposal to come to an understanding with the Lords, 264; supports the Lords' scheme of a joint committee, 266
Sheldon, Sir Richard. *See* Shilton.
Sheriffs, made in order to exclude from Parliament, i. 337
Shilton, Sir Richard, made Solicitor-General, i. 336; his difficulty in making head against Coke, ii. 211; disconcerts Coke, 215; defends the King awkwardly, 244
Ship-money, order issued for the collection of, ii. 197
Ships, demanded from the maritime shires, ii. 85; requisition of, resisted by the City of London, 86
Shrewsbury, Earl of (George Talbot), his house at Clerkenwell, ii. 209
Shropshire, payment of the forced loan in, ii. 113
Sibthorpe, Dr. Robert, his sermon on Apostolical Obedience, ii. 173; licensed by Montaigne, 179
Sluys, Buckingham asks the Dutch to surrender, i. 339
Soissons, Count of, wishes to invade France, ii. 126; asks for some strong place and a niece of Charles in marriage, 137; makes peace with Richelieu, 330
Somerset, county of, payment of the forced loan in, ii. 113
Soubise, the Duke of, seizes French ships at Blavet, i. 151; obtains a success near Rochelle, 253; is defeated, 303; brings the 'St. John' into Falmouth, 331; restoration of his prize demanded by Richelieu, 349; prepares to relieve Rochelle under Pennington's escort, 350; his interview with Charles, ii. 96; blames the Rochellese for not joining Buckingham, 134; argues against the Venetian mediation, 333
Southampton, Earl of (Henry Wriothesley), death of, i. 159
— Treaty of, i. 307, its definition of contraband of war, 345
Southwick, Charles's visit to Sir D. Norton's house at, ii. 331
Spain, its offers about the Palatinate, i. 5; negotiations with, announced by

SPA

James to be at an end, 32; final breach of the negotiations with, 45; terms on which it is ready to treat with the Dutch, ii. 120; exhausted finances of, 121; is really desirous to assist France against England, 123; its antagonism with France in Italy, 316; mission of Porter to, 318

Spanish ambassadors make offers about the Palatinate, i. 5; complain of Buckingham, 19; their followers insulted, 35; hope to ruin Buckingham, 39; bring fresh charges against Buckingham, 60

— Affairs, commissioners for. *See* Commissioners

Spens, Sir James, sent on a mission to Sweden, i. 4; starts for Sweden, 83; presses Gustavus to form an alliance, 138, 139; accompanies Bellin to England to ask James to join in the war, 142; sent back to Sweden, 145

Spinola, Ambrosio, lays siege to Breda, i. 117

Stade, siege and surrender of, ii. 269

Staffordshire, payment of the forced loan in, ii. 113

States General. *See* Netherlands

Steward, Sir Francis, his conduct against the pirates, i. 293; is sent out to clear the seas, 313; fails to do so, 314

Stokes Bay, Pennington's fleet at, i. 239

Strode, William, proposes that money shall be voted for the fleet, i. 277

Stuart, Elizabeth, her marriage, ii. 15

Suffolk, Earl of (Theophilus Howard), advocates an excise, ii. 193; accuses Selden of razing a record, 230; succeeds Buckingham as Warden of the Cinque Ports, 328

— Earl of (Thomas Howard), his name removed from the list of Privy Councillors, i. 168; his death, ii. 66

Sweden, King of. *See* Gustavus Adolphus

TEXEL, the seizure of a French ship in the, ii. 150; Richelieu demands the restitution of the ship seized in the, 351

Throckmorton, Sir Clement, begs Buckingham to wear a shirt of mail, ii. 335

Tillières, Count of, disavows Grey's mission, i. 5; recalled from the embassy in England, 91; investigates an alleged attack upon a clergyman at Titchfield, 306

Tilly, Count of, threatens the Lower Saxon Circle, i. 140; opposes Christian IV., ii. 93; defeats him at Lutter, 94; joins Wallenstein against him, 148; takes Stade, 269

Titchfield, the Queen at, i. 305

Toiras, M. de, fires upon the Rochellese, i. 303; attacks Buckingham on his landing on the Isle of Rhé, ii. 132; admits the female relations of the soldiers into the fort of St. Martin's, 136; exchanges presents with Buckingham, 137; his provisions grow scanty, 160; repulses Buckingham, 161

Tonnage and poundage, grant of, limited to a year in 1625, i. 221; continues to be levied, 272; the Commons ask in 1626 that a bill for its levy shall be brought in, ii. 22; levied after the dissolution, 77; bill for, discussed in 1628, 305; objected to by the King, 306; rejection of the bill made a subject of a remonstrance, 307; considerations on the question at issue in the King's claim to levy, 310

Torture, opinion of the Judges on the illegality of, ii. 347

Totness, Earl of (George Carew), his conversation with Charles on the claim of the Commons to investigate the proceedings of the Council of War, ii. 19

Townley, Zouch, writes verses in praise of Felton, ii. 342

Tremoille, La, Duke of, renounces Protestantism, ii. 330

Trevor, Sir Sackville, blockades Hamburgh, ii. 149; seizes a French ship in the Texel, 150

Trumball, William, recalled from Brussels, i. 308

Turner, Dr., his queries, ii. 21; ordered to explain his words, 23; letter written by him, 24

Tyburn, alleged pilgrimage of the Queen to, ii. 90

VALARESSO, Alvire, mediates between Buckingham and Pembroke, i. 9

Valtelline, the, occupied by Spanish garrisons, i. 53; league for the recovery of, 105; conquered by France, 116.

Vane, Sir Henry, speaks on supply, i. 31

'Vanguard,' the. *See* Rochelle, English ships lent for service against

VEN

Venetian Ambassadors. *See* Valaresso, Contarini
Venice, the Republic of, Wake's mission to, i. 4; its league with France, 105
Vere, Sir Horace, appointed a member of the Council of War, i. 58
Villars, M., arrests English vessels at Havre, i. 348
Ville-aux-Clercs, M. de, is sent to England to receive the King's oath to the marriage treaty, i. 117; arrives in England, 119; asks that Mansfeld may pass through Flanders, 122; his misunderstanding with Buckingham, 123; converses with Buckingham about an attack upon Spain, 148; his opinion of Charles's character, 165; protests against the treatment of the English Catholics, 235
Villiers, Sir Edward, asks the Commons to desist from attacking Buckingham, i. 297

WAKE, Sir Isaac, sent on a mission to Savoy and Venice, i. 4; starts for Italy, 85; negotiates about an attack upon Genoa, 147
Wallenstein, in North Germany, ii. 93; defeats Mansfeld, 94; overpowers Mansfeld, 124; attacks the King of Denmark, 148; passes Hamburg, 149
Wallingford, Viscount (William Knollys), his name removed from the list of Privy Councillors, i. 168; created Earl of Banbury, ii. 87. *See* Banbury, Earl of
Wandesford, Christopher, takes part in Buckingham's impeachment, ii. 50
Ward, Mr., complains of Montague, i. 208
Warwick, Earl of (Robert Rich), proposal made by, i. 310; resists the forced loan, ii. 106
Warwickshire, demand of ship money in, ii. 198
Wentworth, Sir Thomas, his dislike of a war with Spain, i. 20; supports Mallory's motion for an adjournment, 192; his election questioned, 203; his advocacy of his case, 204; his election declared void, 205; his re-election and speech on supply, 290; advises the Commons not to yield to threats, 297; made sheriff to exclude him from Parliament, 337; is dismissed from the justiceship of the peace, and office of Custos Rotulorum, ii. 78; character of his opposition, 79; asks for the Presidency of the Council of the North, 81; his office of Custos Rotulorum

WES

given to Savile, 82; probable explanation of his dismissal, 83; opposes the forced loan, 116; is sent into confinement in Kent, 117; thinks that the Parliament of 1628 ought not to impeach Buckingham, 201; declares the remedy for the evils which afflict the state, 205; compared with Eliot, 207; lays the foundation of the Petition of Right, 208; refuses to investigate foreign actions, 218; but recommends the Commons not to give money till their grievances are redressed, 219; moves for a Committee to consider the question of pressing men, 222; moves a grant of five subsidies, 223; moves that the grant be not reported, and proposes a bill on the liberties of the subject, 224; suggests a bill to provide for billeting soldiers, 227; agrees to naming dates for the payment of the subsidies, 229; his guidance of the House, 230; speaks in favour of a *Habeas Corpus* Act, 237; his view of the situation, 238; is placed on the Committee for drawing up a bill on the liberties of the subject, 239; proposes a bill of his own, 241; position taken by, 242; makes a final attempt to win the King, 244; declares that the laws had been violated by the King's ministers, 245; his leadership comes to an end, 246; his view of the constitution, 247; accedes to the Petition of Right, 251; rejects the Lords' additional clause, 260; yet proposes a mode of accommodation, 261; vindicates his motives against Eliot's objections, 263; meets with but little support, 264; favours the Lords' scheme of a Joint Committee, 266; moves that the remonstrance be presented to the King, 286; attacks the Northern Recusancy Commission, 299; created Lord Wentworth, with expectation of becoming President of the North, 321
Weston, Lord (Richard Weston), named a member of the Lords' Committee on Imprisonment, ii. 253; clause proposed by Arundel probably altered by, 256; the clause rejected by the Commons, 258; wishes his clause not to reflect on the Petition, 259; becomes Lord Treasurer, 320
Weston, Sir Richard, opposed to war with Spain, i. 8; reports Buckingham's narrative, 19 gives himself up to Buckingham, 20 explains the ne-

cessities of the Crown to the Commons, 25; contents himself with less than six subsidies, 31; asks the Council of War for money for Mansfeld, 104; gives no support to the financial demands of the Government, 228; threatens the Commons at Oxford with dissolution, 273; suggests that money may be raised on the security of prize goods, 346; asks the Commons for supply, ii. 20; charges Eliot with things extrajudicial to the House, 62; finds it difficult to find money for Buckingham at Rhé, 139; his consequent ill humour, 140; tries to get money for Buckingham, 154; advocates an excise, 193; created Lord Weston, 232. *See* Weston, Lord

Whistler, Mr., proposes to consult the Lords on the King's necessities, i. 268

Whitelocke, Sir James, takes part in refusing a *habeas corpus* to the prisoners for the loan, ii. 185; his explanation, 185, note 1

Williams, John (Bishop of Lincoln), opposed to war with Spain, i. 8; obtains information from Carondelet of the Spanish plot against Buckingham, 42; recommends Buckingham to become Steward of the Household, 159; administers consolation to James in his last illness, 161; disapproves of Charles's preparations for war, 168; fails to conciliate the King, 169; ordered to stay proceedings against the Catholics, 175; directed to allow the proceedings to continue, 179; his speech at the opening of Charles's first Parliament, 191; replies to Crew, 192; announces the adjournment of the Houses to Oxford, 231; is opposed to the adjournment, 232; seals pardons for imprisoned priests, 236; gives advice about the English Catholics, 255; his fall desired by Buckingham, 258; his part in the opposition to Buckingham, 282; advises Charles not to dissolve the Parliament at Oxford, 294; his dismissal, 334; his character, 335; takes his place in the Parliament of 1628, ii. 202; advocates the doctrine that the King cannot commit without showing cause, 233; named a member of the Lords' Committee on Imprisonment, 253; takes a middle course, 254; clause proposed by him, 255; the ordinary account of his conduct criticised, 255, note 1; explains his clause, 256; objects to Weston's clause, 258; wishes the clause not to reflect on the Petition, 259; supports Harsnet's motion for a request to the King for a better answer to the Petition, 290; is reconciled to Buckingham, 325; is said to have recommended Eliot for promotion, 326

Willoughby, Lord (Robert Bertie), commands the fleet in 1626, ii. 86; is driven back by a storm, 97. *See* Lindsey, Earl of

Wilmot, Lord, put in command of the reinforcements for Rhé, ii. 154; complaint of the want of supplies, 155

Wimbledon, Viscount (Edward Cecil), attempts to maintain discipline in Plymouth harbour, i. 316; calls a Council of War at sea, 317; enters Cadiz Bay, 318; watches the attack upon Puntal, 319; marches to the bridge and offers wine to his men, 321; returns to Puntal, 322; re-embarks his men, and misses the Plate fleet, 323; returns to England, 324; his part in the failure, 325

Wismar, surrender of, demanded by Gustavus, i. 142

Worcester, Earl of (Edward Somerset), death of, ii. 320

Wotton, Lord (Thomas Wotton), excluded from the Privy Council, i. 168

YATES, Mr., complains of Montague, i. 208

Yorkshire, success of the forced loan in, ii. 116

ZORZI, Venetian ambassador in France, sends a project of pacification to England, ii. 332

Zouch, Lord (Edward la Zouche), resigns the Wardenship of the Cinque Ports to Buckingham, i. 157; his conduct on that occasion made a matter of charge against Buckingham, ii. 48

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